

Fame and Fortune Weekly

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY

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HIS OWN BUSINESS

—OR—

FROM ERRAND BOY TO BOSS

By A SELF-MADE MAN

CHAPTER I.

THE STOLEN CASE.

"Joe," said Josiah Starbuck, a portly, red-faced man of middle age, proprietor of Oldport's ship chandlery and marine junk shop, situated on the water front of that ancient New England seaport, "Cap'n Bassett has bought this case. Take it up to his house."

"Yes, sir," said Joe Stanton, Mr. Starbuck's only assistant, who on the wages of an errand boy acted not only in that capacity, but as all-around assistant as well.

"Remember, no loitering on the way. You've got to pass the Common, and as it is Saturday the boys will be playing ball there. Don't stop and look at them, but go about your business. I want you to finish sorting those copper rivets and the rest of the stuff that came in this morning before dark."

"I never loiter on an errand, sir," replied Joe.

"I'm glad to hear it. Sometimes I fancy you do. Baseball seems to have an irresistible attraction for all boys and idle men. The cap'n lives on the hill about half a mile from here."

"I ought to go there and back in no time. It is now three o'clock; I shall expect you back twenty minutes after."

"I'll go and come as quick as I can."

"That's right. Here's the case. Don't drop it or you are liable to scratch it, then the cap'n might send it back."

Joe took the case and started off.

It was a foreign-made case, with brass corner pieces, and was rather attractive to the eye.

Mr. Starbuck had picked it up from the mate of some coaster for a mere song, and had sold it to Captain Bassett for a good price.

The ship chandler was always picking up curiosities and other things for a mere song, and invariably ticketed them for sale at a handsome profit.

That's the way he padded out his daily receipts for his regular business.

By close attention to making the mighty dollar Mr. Starbuck had acquired a considerable bunch of money which he had invested in several sloops, a half or a third interest in each, and in sundry cottages which were never vacant of tenants.

He had been in the business as long as the average inhabitant of Oldport could remember, and he kept everything in the ship chandlery line from a sheet anchor and a huge pile of rusty chain cable outside his door, to a sailor's sewing-kit inside.

In addition, however, his window was filled with all kinds of marine curiosities from foreign climes, such as polished

abalone shells from the Pacific coast; a couple of full-rigged ships in miniature; shells of all kinds from all oceans; weapons from the South Seas, Australia, Borneo, and other places too numerous to mention, as well as a hundred-and-one other odd articles that were for sale but few people outside the summer visitors bought.

The shop had an odor of its own, and the predominating smell was tar.

Joe Stanton was an orphan, and a distant relation of Mr. Starbuck.

When his mother died three years since and left him without a home the ship chandler sent for him to come to Oldport, put him at work in the shop, and boarded him in his apartments on the second floor, where Mrs. Starbuck held sway with a fifteen-year-old niece to help her.

When Joe left the shop he turned into one of the leading streets and walked away from the water front.

Buildings of all shapes and sizes lined this thoroughfare.

Some of them were old when the oldest inhabitant went to school, others were not so old, and others still had been erected in recent years.

As Joe passed the corner of the second block he noticed a couple of shabby-looking boys lounging there in the sun.

He knew them both by sight, and knew nothing good of them.

The taller lad was named Peters, and his father was a disreputable fisherman.

The small lad Joe had heard called Glim, doubtless a twisted abbreviation of his first name.

Three stores from the corner there was a new fangled cider-press in operation in the window, and Joe, in spite of his determination not to loiter, stopped to look at it.

At that moment Peters approached him from the corner.

As for Glim, he had disappeared.

Peters lounged up beside Joe and looked at the foreign-made case which had already attracted his and Glim's attention.

It was not so much the case as the grip that Joe had on the handle which interested Peters at that moment.

Peters had a piece of stick in his hand about two feet long, in the end of which was a nail, the point of which had been filed down sharp.

He suddenly jabbed it against Joe's hand.

With an exclamation of pain the boy dropped the case involuntarily, and looked at the slight puncture from which a drop of blood was oozing.

Peters having accomplished his object, reached down, grabbed the case and started up the street on the run.

Joe saw what he was about and rushed after him. They rapidly approached a vacant lot cut off from the sidewalk by a fence.

"Stop, you rascal!" cried Joe, in hot pursuit.

At that moment another boy appeared on the fence.

"Catch it, Glim," cried Peters, tossing the case to his pal.

"Here, drop that!" shouted Joe.

Peters ran on, while Glim disappeared with his prize.

As it was the case and not the capture of Peters that interested Joe, he made a spring for the top of the fence, and, with the agility of a monkey, was soon astride of it.

He saw Glim and the case vanishing around the corner of a brick building facing on the street he had just passed.

He jumped into the lot and darted after the young scamp.

Glim, however, was a slick youth, and he could run some.

When Joe reached the alley alongside the brick building, Glim was out of sight in the street.

Joe hustled through the alley and then he caught sight of Glim half way down the block running for all he was worth.

Of course, Joe kept on after him.

It would never do to lose that case.

He put on a spurt and was rapidly overtaking Glim when a light wagon rattled down the next street.

Glim threw the case into it, caught on behind and swung himself up.

As the vehicle went on at a rapid gait Glim grinned back at his pursuer.

Joe followed the wagon, and shouted to the driver to stop, but the man paid no attention to him.

In a few minutes the chase proved hopeless.

The wagon turned into the street facing the harbor, and Joe was left half a block behind.

When he got to the corner the vehicle was a block or more away, and going as fast as ever.

Joe stared hopelessly after it, and the figure of the triumphant Glim with the stolen case in his possession.

The wagon was going in the direction of the western outskirts along the harbor of Oldport.

This was where a colony of fishermen lived in small weather-beaten cottages, on the sandy shore between the water and the rise of the cliffs in that direction.

None of them was particularly prosperous, while most of them were looked upon as poor.

Glim and Peters lived here, and they bore a hard name in the colony.

The reputation of their fathers was equally bad.

No self-respecting fisherman associated with them.

It was considered a blessing that their cabins were close together, and separated from the rest of the fishing hamlet.

The wagon Glim had boarded, without taking the trouble to ask the driver's permission, belonged to a large grocery house in Oldport.

The driver was taking a quantity of goods to the fishing colony.

These goods were all in the original packages, and had been purchased at the wholesale price by the "mayor" of the hamlet, who was head of the co-operative store run in the interests of the fishermen to save money on living expenses.

This store was merely a wooden extension erected next to the "mayor's" cottage.

Everybody in the hamlet belonged to the store, paid a small sum in dues each month, which went to the "mayor" to pay him for acting as buyer and storekeeper, and got their groceries at wholesale rates without the trouble of making individual visits to the town.

Glim knew the destination of the wagon when he saw it coming along, that is why he treated himself to a free ride.

He figured that the vehicle would soon outstrip his pursuer and he would easily get away with the case, which he intended to hide where it would be safe till he and his pal, Peters, disposed of it for their mutual benefit.

Joe also recognized the grocery wagon and guessed where it was bound.

With the grit and determination which characterized him he resolved to proceed to the fishing hamlet as fast as he could walk, as to continue running that distance was quite out of the question, and hunt Glim down, even if he had to follow the little rascal to his own door if he went there.

It went against his grain to let the scamp get the better of him.

Of course there was another consideration behind that—the wrath of Mr. Starbuck in case he failed to recover the case.

So Joe tagged on after the wagon, keeping to the sidewalk until he reached the end of the town proper, and then plodding across the sand.

The fishing cottages were strung out at haphazard for a distance of a quarter of a mile.

Each was surrounded by a fence of some kind enclosing a patch of ground devoted to the cultivation of vegetables.

Several well-trodden paths ran through the hamlet, and Joe followed the one nearest the cliffs, where he was least likely to attract observation from Glim if that lad was on the watch to see if he would come out there after the case.

When the wagon reached the "store" at the "mayor's" house, which it did long before Joe got to the end of the Oldport waterfront street, Glim got off with the case and started for the cabin where he lived.

To reach it he had to climb a rocky path to a sort of shelf on the cliff, on which were perched the two isolated habitations.

Behind the Peters' cabin was a break in the cliff, and into this fissure Glim went, and, clambering up among the rocks, reached the top, where he stopped beside a dead pine tree.

The trunk was hollow, with an opening at the side near the bottom.

Into this recess Glim dropped the case, after a cautious look around to satisfy himself that he was alone.

Having disposed of the case he returned to the door of his home and sat down to await the coming of his friend Peters.

Joe saw the grocer's wagon returning and he proceeded to head it off.

It was driven by a young man of perhaps twenty.

"A boy, who goes by the name of Glim, jumped on your wagon with a fancy case at the corner of Washington and Prescott streets, and you brought him out here," said Joe.

"Is that so?" said the driver. "I didn't know that."

"Then you were not aware that you had a passenger behind?"

"No."

"When you stopped to deliver your goods did you see a shabby boy with a brass-tipped case in his hand?"

"I didn't notice him."

"You left your load at the co-operative store?"

"Yes."

"All right. That's all. Much obliged to you."

"You're welcome," said the young fellow, driving on.

Joe went on to the store and made inquiries about Glim, who was as well known as he was disliked by the fishing fraternity.

Several persons had seen Glim with the case and had wondered where he got it.

They were not surprised when Joe informed them that Peters had stolen it from him and passed it to Glim, who had brought it out there.

Joe learned that Glim had gone off in the direction of his home.

He also discovered that the lad's other name was Sharkey.

He proceeded to the two dwellings on the shelf of the cliff, and when Glim saw him coming he made himself invisible behind a large rock.

Joe had been told that the Sharkey cabin was the one on the right side of the shelf, so he went to the open door and pounded.

A shabbily dressed woman of forty with a hard look came forward and asked him what he wanted.

"Are you Mrs. Sharkey?" asked Joe.

"Yes," responded the woman, sharply.

"Is your son, Glim, around the house?"

"No. I haven't seen the young ruffian since he came home to his dinner. What do you want with him?"

Joe explained the theft of the brass-tipped case, and how Glim had brought it out there on the grocer's wagon.

"The case belongs to Mr. Starbuck, you say?"

"It belongs to Captain Bassett, who bought it this morning at our shop. If I report the facts to Mr. Starbuck, he'll send a policeman out here to arrest both Peters and your son."

"What was in the case?"

"Nothing."

"What is it worth?"

"Mr. Starbuck values it at \$5. It is lined inside with camphor wood."

"I'll speak to Glimmy about it and make him return it to your shop. I don't want no policeman comin' out here after my son. He's bad enough, the ruffian, but I don't want to see him go to jail."

"He must be around here somewhere, for he was seen coming this way with the case in his hand."

"Who told you that?" said the woman, aggressively.

"A woman and two men who know him down at the co-operative store."

"It's like them to make trouble for us up here," she said, angrily.

"You'll attend to the matter, will you?" said Joe.

"Yes," said the woman, sourly.

Joe bade the woman good-day, but having very little confidence in what Mrs. Sharkey was likely to do, he determined to hang around the place and see if Glim showed up.

Noticing the break in the cliff, it struck him that Glim might be hiding there.

He walked into the opening and mounted to the top of the rocks.

There he saw Glim and Pixy Peters kneeling beside the hollow dead tree with the case which the former had just pulled out.

CHAPTER II.

THE RESCUE ON THE CLIFF.

Joe dropped behind a clump of bushes and watched them. Hardly had he done so when Glim got up, ran to the edge of the cliff overlooking the shelf and glanced down.

He wanted to see if Joe was still talking to his mother. He found that his pursuer was nowhere in sight.

He looked down into the break in the rocks, suspicious that Joe might have seen him and Peters come that way, but the ship chandler's assistant was not there.

He called Peters over.

That lad put down the case and came.

The two young scamps scanned the sandy shore and wondered where Joe had got to.

Their backs were presented to the clump of bushes, and also to the tree where the case lay at its roots.

Joe saw his chance to get possession of it.

He crept around the end of the bushes, took another look at Glim and Peters, and seeing that they were still absorbed in the shore, he walked over and picked the case up.

Then he retreated to the bushy screen and waited to see what would happen when the two boys found that the box had vanished.

He did not have long to wait.

Glim and Peters, having reached the conclusion that Joe was hiding somewhere to pounce upon them when they came along, returned to the tree.

Their eyes stuck out when they missed the box.

"What did you do with it, Pixy? Put it back in the tree?" said Glim.

"No. I left it right here," replied Peters.

"If you left it there, why ain't it there, then?"

"Somebody must have swiped it on us."

The boys looked around in a startled way, but nobody was in sight upon the cliff.

They could see around for quite a distance, as the ground sloped gently away from the rocky barrier.

A hundred yards away, however, was a straggling wood of pines and cedars, which shut off the rolling country beyond.

At the moment a coal black pony, with an unseated girl clinging desperately to its neck, came suddenly into view from around the end of the wood where a path led to the top of the cliff.

It was clear to be seen that the animal had taken fright at something and, becoming unmanageable, was running wild.

At the rate the pony was going it would soon reach the edge of the rocks.

Unless the animal changed its course, or stopped, a tragedy was likely to take place.

Joe's attention, as well as that of the two scamps, was attracted to the mad course of the pony.

While Glim and Peters stood and gazed at the animal open mouthed, Joe, realizing what was likely to happen unless something was done, jumped out of the bushes, leaving the case behind him, and rushed forward to head off the runaway.

Glim and Peters heard his steps, looked around, and, taking alarm, scattered to avoid him, thinking he was trying to catch them.

Joe paid no attention to them, but kept on past the dead tree.

The pony's head was down, with the bitt in its teeth, and it came on wildly.

Joe hadn't gone more than twenty feet before the animal was right on him.

Then the pony saw a moving object in its path and swerved.

At the same instant Joe sprang in the same direction and seized the bridle rein.

The pony pulled him off his feet and dragged him along for several yards before the boy's weight retarded its speed.

As it was, the animal, with both its fair, helpless rider, and Joe, too, would have gone down over the face of the cliff but for the dead tree.

Joe was flung against it with some force.

He made a desperate clutch at its trunk, got a firm grip, and the pony was brought up all standing, with Joe holding the rein with only one hand.

The strain on his muscles for the moment seemed to tear his arm loose from his shoulder, and the pony swung around with its hind legs almost on the edge of the rocks, below which there was a sheer fall of fifty feet to the beach.

Joe gripped the trunk with his legs, reached out his left arm and, grabbing the rein with that hand, relieved the strain on his right arm.

It was lucky he was able to do this, for the pony began tugging to get away.

Had Joe's grip broken the animal would have backed off the cliff.

But he held on for all he was worth, and speaking to the nervous animal in soft tones, gradually calmed him down, while the girl dismounted with some difficulty, as her foot was entangled in the stirrup, but she managed to disengage it.

"You have saved my life," she said to Joe, as she added her efforts to his to quiet her pony.

"I guess I have," admitted the ship chandler's boy. "If you and the horse had gone over the cliffs both of you would have broken your necks."

"That's a fact. I thought I could stop the pony by my own strength, but the distance was too short for my weight to have the desired effect."

"You're a brave boy to risk your life for me," said the girl, gratefully.

"A fellow doesn't always think of the risk when he has a duty to perform," said Joe, regarding the girl with admiring eyes, for she was very pretty, in spite of her mussed hair and gown.

"My parents will be deeply grateful to you, too, when they learn what you have done. What is your name?"

"Joe Stanton."

"Mine is Mabel Price."

"Your father owns the Oldport Canning House, doesn't he?"

"Yes. And your father—"

"I have none. I am an orphan, and live with Josiah Starbuck, who owns the ship chandlery store on Water street."

"I know his place. I have often looked in at his window at the strange foreign curiosities he has on exhibition. Do you work for him?"

"Yes."

"I thought your face was a bit familiar to me. I must have seen you in the store."

"That is quite likely, for I've been there for the last three years. Mr. Starbuck is a distant relation of mine."

"Indeed. It is fortunate for me that you were out here on the cliffs this afternoon."

"I was here only by accident."

He explained what brought him there, and remarked that he guessed Mr. Starbuck would read the riot act to him when he got back as he had been away so long, and he still had to return to town and execute his errand.

"It wasn't your fault that those unprincipled boys stole the case, and you had to follow them to get it back. I am sure when you tell Mr. Starbuck how you saved my life he will not find fault with you."

"I'm not worrying about what he is likely to say. I guess your pony is all right now. How came the animal to run away with you?"

"I was returning home along the road below here when a couple of ragged men rushed out from behind a tree waving sticks, and commanded me to stop."

"The rascals! Did they intend to hold you up and rob you?"

"I'm afraid that was their intention. Prince, that's my pony's name, was greatly startled, and he shied so violently as to partly unseat me. Then as the men came on he made a spring, cleared the hedge and dashed in this direction. The leap over the hedge was so unexpected to me that I was thrown off the saddle and would have fallen off had I not grasped him by the neck. I was so frightened and confused that I did not know where we were going until you seized the bridle rein and partly stopped him; then I caught a glimpse of the sea, and I nearly fainted from terror when I realized how near the cliffs I was."

"Well, you're all right now."

"Yes, thanks to you, Mr. Stanton. I shall never forget the

service you have rendered me as long as I live," and she flashed a bewitching look in his face. "I am sure I look almost a fright with my hair all mussed and my gown all rumbled."

"Oh, you don't look bad. Roll your hair up under your hat and no one will know anything is the matter with it."

Mabel Price adopted Joe's suggestion, which she probably would have done anyway, and the boy led the pony over toward the bushes where he left the case.

Glim and Peters had been interested observers at a safe distance of all that passed.

It was lucky they did not think to look around for the case, which they had forgotten in the excitement.

Joe stepped into the bushes and recovered it.

When Glim and Peters saw it in his hand they nearly had a fit.

They had counted on making a dollar out of it, and a dollar looked big to them.

Now they saw they were dished out of their prize, after the smart effort they had made in capturing it, and they were as mad as two disturbed hornets.

Joe and Mabel walked toward the road together, the latter leading her pony.

"I hope we won't meet those tramps," she said.

"Don't worry. I'll protect you, Miss Price," said Joe.

She did not doubt that for a moment.

Neither did she doubt that a boy who was so plucky as to stop a runaway pony close to the edge of the cliffs would be able to master two husky hobos.

They reached the road a hundred yards from the tree where the tramps had been hiding, and they saw nothing of the two men.

"Shall I help you mount, Miss Price," said Joe.

"If you please," she replied.

In another moment she was in the saddle.

"I suppose we'll say good-by now," he said.

"Oh, no. I'm not going to leave you in the road. I will keep pace with you till our routes separate. Where are you going with the case?"

"To deliver it at Captain Bassett's house on the hill."

"I live on the top of the hill, a little over a block from Captain Bassett. You must call and see me at the first chance. Can't you come to-morrow afternoon? My father and mother will be anxious to thank you for saving me."

"I will be pleased to do so if I can."

They continued to converse until they reached the gate that opened on Captain Bassett's grounds.

There they shook hands and said good-by, Mabel starting her pony into a gallop, while Joe opened the gate and entered the garden, taking a gravel walk up to the front porch where Captain Bassett sat reading a newspaper.

CHAPTER III.

WHAT HAPPENED THAT NIGHT.

"This is a nice time for you to come back, isn't it?" snorted Mr. Starbuck, when Joe came back to the shop. "You've been playing baseball, I suppose, instead of coming straight back here as I told you to. Well, you'll attend to your neglected work in the shop after supper."

"You are wrong about my playing baseball. I didn't pass the Common at all," said Joe.

"You've been away over two hours. If you didn't stop to play ball, what else took your attention?"

"Five minutes after I left here, as I was walking up Jefferson street, the case was stolen from me."

"Stolen from you!" ejaculated Mr. Starbuck, now all attention. "How could it be taken from you in broad daylight?"

Joe explained how and by whom the theft had been worked, and how he had chased Glim until he boarded the grocer's wagon.

"Then you've lost the case?" cried the ship chandler, angrily.

"Oh, I got it back, and that and something else is what kept me away so long."

Mr. Starbuck was greatly relieved to hear that his boy had recovered the case, for it represented \$5 to him, and \$5 was \$5 to Mr. Starbuck.

He listened to Joe's story of how he had followed Glim Sharkey clear to the fishing hamlet, and how the boy finally recaptured the case.

"You did well, Joe, so I'll excuse you this time," said the ship chandler, now that he knew he would not have to return Captain Bassett his money.

"I haven't told you all my story," said Joe.

"What more is there to tell?"

"Nothing more about the case. The rest of my story concerns a runaway pony and the daughter of Mr. Price, proprietor of the Cannery on Jefferson street."

"Let me hear about it."

Joe related the incident on the cliff in which he figured as the rescuer of Miss Price.

"That was a very creditable feat, Joe," said the ship chandler. "It is bound to bring you to the notice of Mr. Price. He will probably give you a handsome reward."

"I wouldn't accept anything like pay for what I did," said Joe.

"He wouldn't call it pay. It would be a present."

"I wouldn't take a present of money."

"Why not? Don't you know you must never turn down an offer of money?"

Joe persisted in saying that no amount of money was equivalent to a human life, consequently he didn't believe that Mabel's father would offer to square his obligation on such a basis.

By the time their argument was over, Mr. Starbuck's niece came into the shop by the rear stairs and told him his supper was ready.

It was nearly dark by that time, so Joe lighted a lamp in the little office, and a couple of others in the shop, then he resumed his work of sorting a box full of copper rivets.

Half an hour later the ship chandler came downstairs and Joe went up to his supper.

Mr. Starbuck had told his wife about Joe's rescue of Mabel Price, and the lady wanted to hear the story from his lips.

He obliged her, and had Jessie Dare, the niece, as another interested listener.

"Seems to me you had a very narrow escape yourself, Joe," said Mrs. Starbuck.

"I did. The dead tree on the cliff saved us all from going over," said Joe.

"You are entitled to a life-saving medal. I suppose the Prices will be sending for you to call at their house. They belong to the best society, so you'll have to be on your best behavior when you go," said Mrs. Starbuck, beamingly.

After supper Joe returned to the store and the sorting of the rivets.

He completed the job at eight o'clock and the shop was closed for the night.

Joe put on his hat and went out to call on his friend, Bob Blake.

He remained with Bob, who lived near the Common, until a quarter of eleven, and then started home.

An alley from Jefferson street enabled him to reach the back of the building where the ship chandlery shop was.

As he approached the end of the alley he heard voices, and he wondered who was there at that time of night talking.

He stopped and listened.

"It's eleven o'clock, or close to it, Bill. I guess it'll be safe for us to begin operations on that door," said one of them. "The place has been shut up these three hours, and I don't think any little noise we make is likely to attract attention upstairs. What do you say?"

"They seem to have gone to bed upstairs, so I guess we can venture. Get out your jimmy and we'll try the door. I guess nothin' more'n a stout lock holds it. If there's a bolt we'll use the drill and saw," replied the other.

"Burglars!" breathed Joe, "and they're aiming to get into our shop. Mr. Starbuck keeps money in the safe in the office, and as they appear to have tools they might be able to get into it if left alone. I wonder where the policeman who patrols this neighborhood is? He might be near by, and he might be clear up at the other end of Water street. They ought to have more police in this town. One man has to cover too much ground, and is likely to be out of reach when wanted."

He peeped around the corner of the alley and saw two dark shadows at the back door of the store.

Joe knew the door was doubly bolted on the inside, but a drill and a saw would soon make an opening around each bolt after the men had located them.

It would take the men perhaps half an hour to get in, and while they were at work Joe could not go up the back outside stairs and arouse Mr. Starbuck without running into the clutches of the rascals.

Had there been but one man the boy would have tackled him, but two were odds that he could not hope to overcome.

Then he thought of the saloon two blocks away on Water street.

The place doubtless had a telephone, and it would enable him to communicate with the police.

He retreated through the alley and made tracks for the saloon.

He was half way to it when two men rushed upon him from the shelter of a doorway, and one of them knocked him senseless with the blow of a weapon.

The men went through his clothes with very poor results, for Joe had little money, and seldom carried more than a quarter around with him.

He had but twelve cents on this occasion.

"Only a dime and two coppers," said one of the men. "He ain't worth the trouble of knockin' out."

"He's only a boy. You can't expect a kid to have much money. Come on. We'll spend it in a couple of drinks."

"Goin' to leave him here on the sidewalk?"

"Why not? We'll drag him into the doorway."

"Better take him out on the wharf and shove him under the end of that lumber pile. Then he'll be out of the way."

"I don't see the use of takin' so much trouble."

"Well, you see we're strangers in this town, and if the cop should find this boy lying knocked out we might be pulled in on suspicion."

"The cop would have to find us first."

"He might see us in the saloon as he passed, and then when he ran across the boy he'd figure that perhaps we were at the bottom of the matter."

"Since you're bent on it we'll carry him over to the dock," said the other.

Accordingly, the unconscious boy was taken out on the wharf and stowed in a nook of a pile of shingles which had been landed there from a coaster that day.

In the course of an hour he regained his senses.

He sat up and looked around him, but all was very dark except straight ahead of him.

There he saw a patch of starry sky as one looking out of the mouth of a small tunnel.

He wondered where he was.

Then he recognized the splash of water underneath him.

"I must be on one of the wharves," he thought. "How did I get here?"

It was impossible for him to guess.

He recalled the attack made upon him by the two men from the doorway.

They had acted so quickly that he was down and out before he could put up the least resistance.

"I guess they must have fetched me here. If their object was robbery they didn't get much from me."

He felt in his pocket and found his twelve cents gone.

He was about to crawl out of the hole among the shingles when he heard voices.

Two men were walking on the other side of the shingles.

In a few moments their forms blotted out most of the sky view at the entrance of the hole.

"We done the trick very nicely, Bill," said one of them. "Now we must get home with the goods. To-morrow we'll sail down to Boston and sell the stuff to our friend, the junkman, who is always at home."

Joe recognized the voice as that of one of the two chaps who had started to break into Mr. Starbuck's shop.

Evidently they had gone in and got away with a bunch of stuff, for they had two well-filled bags with them.

"Too bad we couldn't get at what's inside the safe," said Bill. "That's the disadvantage of not bein' up in this kind of business, and havin' the tools to work with."

"What's the use of talkin', Bill? We're not cracksmen, we're honest fishermen," said the other with a chuckle.

"We've been doin' pretty good this winter and spring for amachurs. We'd have starved, and our families, too, if we hadn't used our wits. The perlice have charged our jobs up to crooks from the outside. We ought to feel complimented, eh, Jim?"

"Sure we had, and we do. As the fishin' season is on now, we won't have to do nothin' more of this sort till cold weather sets in ag'in, and not then if we have anythin' like luck in our regular business."

"Starbuck will be a wild man when he looks in his store to-morrer mornin' and sees that somebody has cleaned out most of his curiosities," said Bill. "We ought to get a good price for the stuff in Boston."

"We must hold out for what we think the stuff is worth. The junkman has done the right thing by us so far."

"As far as we know he has, but we didn't get no fancy figures."

"Of course not. Junkmen don't pay anythin' more'n they

kin help. But this chap has treated us fairer than any one else we've gone to. Take a squint, Bill, and see if the perliceman has gone on his way."

"I don't see him," said Bill, after a look.

"Then pull our boat from under the wharf. We'll put the bags in it and be off. It's after twelve now."

Bill reached over the stringpiece for a rope, hauled on it and then jumped down into the large rowboat.

Jim passed him the bags, one after the other, and got in himself.

Joe crawled to the opening of the nook and looked after the men as they took to their oars and pulled away.

They rowed out a hundred yards from the wharf and then turned westward.

The boy was satisfied they belonged to the fishing hamlet and were taking their plunder there.

The night was clear enough for him to follow the course of the boat with his eyes, and he determined to shadow it to its destination and find out the cottage or cabin they were going to.

By spotting that he would be able to put the police on to the two fishermen thieves, and then their identity would come out and they would be sent to prison for their crooked work on the side.

From what he had heard of the reputations of the fathers of Glim Sharkey and Pixey Peters he had a suspicion that these two men would prove to be them.

Nothing, however, had ever been brought against the men except drunkenness and general disreputable behavior, which had caused them and their families to be tabooed by the rest of the fishing hamlet.

It is true their wives contributed to the co-operative store, and secured the benefits accruing to membership in it; but nobody objected to that, for the Sharkey and Peters families had to live, and it would have been a hardship on them to have deprived them of the advantages the rest of the colony enjoyed.

Joe left the wharf and walked along Water street, keeping pace with the boat.

While he could easily see the boat as it was rowed along, the men in it could not see him owing to the dark background of buildings.

Besides, they were not looking for pursuit.

Apparently everything was working their way.

They had escaped observation from the one policeman who patrolled the water front and adjacent street up and down the entire width of the town.

His beat was a long one, and anybody familiar with it and his customary movements could keep out of his way without much trouble.

What the two fishermen-thieves didn't know about the movements of the night guardians of the peace in Oldport was hardly worth mentioning.

They knew most of the officers well, and the officers knew them, and both often stopped to talk when they met.

The men pulled steadily, and as Joe walked as fast as he could he gradually drew ahead of the boat, which was his object, as he wanted to reach the fishing hamlet before they did, so he would not lose them in the shuffle.

Joe reached the end of Water street and started across the sands toward the line of cliffs which practically began where the town itself ended in that direction.

The rowers might have seen him now if they looked his way, but in that case they would have had no suspicion about him, thinking he was a fisherman returning late to his home.

A walk of fifteen minutes brought the boy to the hamlet, and he passed along among the houses, all dark and silent at that hour.

He felt so certain that the men were Sharkey and Peters that he did not stop anywhere along the route till he reached the immediate vicinity of the rocky path leading to the shelf on which the two lone cabins stood.

There he hid behind a rock whence he could see where the boat landed.

Ten minutes later he saw it being pulled in to the beach.

The men landed, looked carefully around, pulled the bags from the boat and carried them towards the cliff.

Mounting the rocks, they passed the cabins and entered the break of the cliff.

But for the fact that there were no houses anywhere around on the top of the cliffs, the nearest dwelling being a farmhouse half a mile distant, Joe would have thought he had made a wrong guess at the men's identity.

He had looked to see the men carry their bags each into his own cabin, but when they did not, and entered the fissure

in the rocks instead, he jumped to the conclusion that they were going to conceal their plunder till they were ready to take it away.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ARREST OF BILL SHARKEY AND HIS PAL.

Joe waited patiently for the men to reappear.

He would like to have followed them into the break, but feared discovery.

That would have meant trouble for himself and the loss of Mr. Starbuck's property, which he counted on recovering.

Fifteen minutes elapsed, then Bill and Jim came out on the shelf again.

Each was now smoking a pipe, and they stood and talked together another fifteen minutes.

By that time they finished their smoke, and, knocking the ashes from their pipes, one entered the Peters' cabin and the other the Sharkey cabin.

"That settles their identity for a certainty," thought Joe. "I know who they are now."

Before returning to town and calling at the station-house Joe determined to visit the break in the rocks and see if he could find where the fishermen-thieves had hidden their plunder.

He waited a good quarter of an hour before venturing up on the shelf to give the men time to turn in for the rest of the night.

At length he mounted the rocky path, entered the fissure, and, striking a match, looked around.

He hunted the hollow place all over, but the bags were not there, as far as he could see.

"Maybe they took them up on the top of the cliff and hid them in the bushes," he reflected.

He started up there and began beating the bushes.

At the end of ten minutes he found the bags well hidden from observation on the outside.

The first idea was to remove them.

He could carry them over to the wood and leave them there in a safe place.

"If I do that there will be no use of my having these chaps arrested, as they deserve to be, for the stolen goods will not be found where they put them. They should be safe here until to-morrow, and long before that I'll have the police on the job. If those fellows are not brought up with a round turn they'll keep on stealing. There's been a number of petty thefts reported all winter, and from the little I heard of the men's conversation there seems to be no doubt that they are guilty of those jobs. The police will be glad to get real evidence that will convict the thieves. Yes, I'll not disturb the bags, but go back, awaken Mr. Starbuck, tell him what has happened, and let him make the complaint, which I will back up."

With this purpose in view he returned to the shore, and started back to town.

In due time he reached the shop, found it lighted up, somewhat to his surprise, and, trying the street door, saw that it was not locked.

He walked in and discovered Mr. Starbuck, in his shirt and trousers, talking to the policeman on the beat.

The officer, while making his round, had found the street door unfastened and walked in.

Looking into the little office he saw that things had been tumbled about in there, and he observed that the window, which had so long contained the ship chandler's stock of curiosities, had been pretty well cleaned out.

A robbery had clearly been committed, and he proceeded to arouse the proprietor.

Mr. Starbuck came down and was paralyzed when he saw what had happened.

As he set great store by his curios, many of which were quite valuable, and all represented a monetary value, he was in a great funk over his loss.

The thieves had not left the least clue behind them, and their capture was a matter that only the police could be depended on to solve.

At the policeman's suggestion, Mr. Starbuck made a hasty inventory of his missing property, and he was on the point of going upstairs to complete dressing himself to accompany the officer to the station-house, when Joe walked in.

His appearance was a great surprise to the ship chandler, for Mr. Starbuck supposed him to be asleep in his room, for it was now nearly two in the morning.

"Where in thunder have you been till this hour?" demanded the ship chandler, staring at his errand boy and assistant.

"Surprised to see me walk in at this time, aren't you?" replied Joe, with a smile.

"Answer my question, please."

"Well, it's quite a story. I came home by the usual back way at eleven and found two men breaking into the shop by the back door," began the boy.

"You did? At eleven, you say?"

"Yes."

"I passed here and tried the door about that time, and it was locked and nothing had been disturbed in your window," said the policeman.

"The men had probably not got in then," said Joe.

"What did you do when you saw the men breaking in? Why didn't you give the alarm? Now I've lost over \$100 worth of stuff," said Mr. Starbuck.

"No good would have come of giving an alarm. The men would have escaped, and they might have caught me and handled me roughly. I thought the best way would be to go to the saloon on Water street, down our block, and telephone the station-house."

"Did you do it? If you had, policemen would have been here hours ago if your statement of the time is correct," said Mr. Starbuck.

"I never reached the saloon."

"What prevented you?"

"Two men attacked me a few doors from the shop and laid me out."

"Confederates of the thieves, I suppose?"

"No, I don't think so. Just two rascals who wanted to see how much money I had. They got it all—twelve cents—and they carried me out on the wharf opposite and left it in a shingle pile. When I came to my senses I heard voices and saw two men with bags, and their talk showed me they were the men I had discovered trying to force our back door. They had succeeded, for they had two bags full of plunder with them."

"You saw who they were, then?" said the officer. "You'll be able to identify them when they're caught."

"I didn't get much of a sight of their faces, but I found out their identity all right."

"Good," said the policeman. "They belong around this neighborhood, eh?"

"They are fishermen and live at the hamlet."

"How did you recognize them if you didn't see their faces well?"

"Their talk indicated in a general way who they were. They put off with the bags in a rowboat, and I followed the boat along the shore till I saw it land at the end of the hamlet. The men carried their plunder up through the opening at the back of the shelf on which the cabins of Peters and Sharkey stand, and hid them in the bushes. Their intention is to take the stuff to Boston to-morrow and sell it there to some junk-man."

"Well, well," said Mr. Starbuck, impatiently, "do you know who the men are?"

"After hiding their plunder one went into the Peters' cabin, and the other into the Sharkey cabin, from which I conclude one is Jim Peters and the other Bill Sharkey. They called each other Bill and Jim."

"You can swear to this story, young man?" said the policeman.

"Yes, and I can show where the two bags of stolen goods are hidden."

"Sharkey and Peters bear a tough reputation, but they have never been suspected of a propensity for thieving," said the officer. "It is possible they are responsible for the many small thefts which have occurred during the last five months, the perpetrators of which have not been caught."

"I heard them speak about other jobs they had pulled off successfully. They would have got away with this one if it hadn't been for me," said Joe.

"I'll fix the rascals," cried Mr. Starbuck. "I'll swear out a warrant against them at once."

The ship chandler went upstairs, completed his dressing, and then accompanied by the policeman and Joe, started for the station-house.

Mr. Starbuck charged Peters and Sharkey with robbing his shop.

The party then visited the house of the magistrate, woke him up and secured a warrant against the two fishermen.

This was handed to the officer to carry to the station-house.

The light wagon belonging to the department was hitched

up and four officers went in it with Joe, Mr. Starbuck returning to his shop.

On arriving at the foot of the shelf, Joe took two of the policemen on the cliff and pointed out the hiding place of the bags.

They were taken down to the wagon.

The officers then went to the doors of the cabins and awoke the inmates.

Peters and Sharkey were commanded to put on their clothes and come to town.

When they put up a protest they were told they were under arrest.

When they were brought down to the wagon and saw the bags of plunder, and Joe, whom they recognized as the ship chandler's assistant, their courage oozed away, for they felt they were in up to their necks, but they could not help wondering how they had been detected.

They were driven into town, charged with their crime, and locked up.

By that time Joe, who had left the wagon at the corner of Water street, was in bed and almost asleep.

He felt quite elated over the good work he had accomplished and the commendation he received from Mr. Starbuck, who had recovered his serenity when he learned that his property had been recovered and was in the hands of the police.

The magistrate held court on Sunday morning when any Saturday night prisoners were to be disposed of.

Usually there were several drunks, for Saturday being payday at the different factories, more men had a thirst that night than on any other evening of the week, and some of them wouldn't go home until they became so disorderly that they had to be run in, with the prospect of a fine ahead, which further depleted the amount of their wages.

On this particularly Sunday morning there happened to be nothing on the court cards except the case of theft against Peters and Sharkey, and when they were brought into court Mr. Starbuck and Joe, with the five policemen connected with the job, were on hand to give their testimony.

The first witness was the officer who made the discovery that the shop had been burglarized.

He made his statements in an official way.

Mr. Starbuck followed him.

He told how the policeman had aroused him from his sleep, and how when he came downstairs he found his shop had been broken into and robbed of all his best curiosities.

These were laid out on a table in the court-room, and he identified all of them as the stolen property.

Joe then took the witness chair, and his testimony was both interesting and convincing.

It fastened the guilt on the accused, and as Bill Sharkey and Jim Peters listened to it they understood at last how they had been detected.

The two policemen who accompanied Joe to the top of the cliff described where the two bags of plunder had been found, and that completed the case against the prisoners.

"What have you got to say?" asked the magistrate, addressing the accused.

"Nothin' except that we're not guilty," replied Sharkey. "We kin prove by our wives and families that we was home all night, consequently it couldn't have been us the young gent says he saw at the back of the ship chandlery, nor ag'in on the wharf, nor in the boat, nor out at the cliffs. We always turns in 'tween nine and ten, 'cept we have visitors, and we didn't have none last night. As for our stealin' them goods, we deny it. As they wasn't found in our possession, there hain't no evidence that we ever had 'em in our hands. The cliff is open to anybody to go and come, and anybody might have hid them in the bushes. The young gent swears we was the men he saw put the bags in the boat, row it to the hamlet and take 'em to the top of the cliff. Seein' as we was in bed and sound asleep at that hour, it stands to reason he mistook somebody else for us."

Such was the defense put up by Sharkey for himself and his friend Peters, and he requested that his wife and son Glim be called as witnesses, they being in court.

The magistrate called them, and they both swore that Sharkey went to bed at ten o'clock and did not go out all evening.

"What time did you go to bed, Mrs. Sharkey?" asked the magistrate.

"Soon after my husband."

"Was he asleep then?"

"He was."

"And you went to sleep soon after, I suppose?"

The woman admitted that she had.

The magistrate put the same question to Glim, who made practically the same answers.

Whether the pair were lying or not, their testimony agreed on one point—that they were unaware of the movements of the husband and father between the hours of 10:30 and when the police thundered on their door for admission.

Their intention, of course, was to impress on the magistrate the fact that if Sharkey went to bed at ten he had stayed there.

Mrs. Peters and Pixey also swore that Jim Peters was in bed and asleep before 10:30, and the magistrate, after listening to their stories, questioned them in the same way as he had Mrs. Sharkey and Glim, and got similar replies.

In his own mind he was satisfied that the men were guilty, so he held them for trial at the next term of the Circuit Court.

So the two fishermen went back to jail, and their wives and sons departed for their homes greatly upset, and aggressively disposed toward Joe Stanton, whom they held responsible for the trouble that had come upon them.

CHAPTER V.

THE FIRE.

The curiosities having been retained by the police as evidence to be used against the fishermen at their trial, Mr. Starbuck's window presented a bare look to the many people drawn to the vicinity of the shop that day when the news of the robbery of the ship chandler's place got about town.

Joe was regarded as the hero of the burglary, as indeed he was, and he was the recipient of sundry compliments from those who knew him well.

That afternoon he dressed himself with extra care and went to call on the Prices.

He received a warm reception from Miss Mabel, whom he asked for, and was introduced to her father and mother, who lost no time in assuring him of their gratitude for the service he had rendered their daughter.

He found the young lady more charming than ever, for in expectation of his coming she had added a few extra frills, as young ladies will do even when their charms are sufficient of themselves to make them appear irresistible.

Mabel made a good deal of her young rescuer, and she was of the opinion that he looked to considerable advantage in his Sunday clothes.

He undoubtedly did, and as Joe was a good looking, manly boy, Mabel was a good deal taken with him.

At any rate, they got on very nicely together, and it did not take a great deal of urging to prevail on the lad to remain to tea.

After the meal, which he enjoyed hugely, he stayed on till half-past nine, when he took his leave, after receiving an invitation to call soon again, which he promised to do.

On Tuesday Joe received a watch and chain from Mr. Price, a set of gold sleeve buttons from Mrs. Price, and a handsome watch charm from Mabel, in recognition of his valuable service.

Joe was delighted with his presents, and also pleased that the manufacturer of canned fish had not offered him money for what he had done.

He paid his second visit to the Prices on the following Sunday evening, when he took occasion to thank Mr. and Mrs. Price and Mabel for their presents.

"My dear boy, they but poorly evidence the gratitude we feel towards you for saving our daughter's life," said Mr. Price. "I trust some day I may be able to express our appreciation in a more substantial way. If at any time you feel I can do you a favor, I trust you will call on me, and if it is within my power I will gladly grant it."

"Thank you, sir, I will bear your request in mind," said Joe, who did not dream how soon circumstances would induce him to avail himself of the gentleman's offer.

As he was walking through the alley that night, two boys suddenly rushed out from the direction of the rear of the ship chandlery and upset him in their haste to get away.

Although he did not actually recognize them, he was sure they were Glim Sharkey and Pixey Peters, and their presence there did not mean any good he was sure.

He sprang up and rushed after them to try and catch one of them at least, but they had obtained too good a start, and were too spry for him to overtake either.

When he returned to the alley he noticed a suspicious light

around the turn, and when he came in sight of the back of the shop he saw that the shop was on fire inside.

He associated this discovery with Glim and Peters, but could not understand how they could have been the cause of it until he found that the back door had been broken in.

He rushed upstairs to alarm Mr. Starbuck, but he found that the ship chandler and his wife had not yet returned from a visit they were paying at the house of a friend.

Then he rushed back to the shop and tried to put out the fire, but soon saw that this was beyond his efforts, so he ran out on the street and began alarming the neighborhood.

As it was Sunday night, the street was quiet and his voice reached the dwellers on the upper floors of the buildings like the clarion notes of a trumpet.

Longshoremen and dock laborers generally lived in the tenements along Water street above the stores, and presently window after window was thrown up and the opening filled with one or more tenant.

The fire being in the rear of the shop there was no sign of it in front, except a thin film of smoke not noticeable in the darkness.

"Fire! Fire! Fire!" yelled Joe.

He was making noise enough to awaken the dead, and he certainly aroused everybody on that block.

Men and boys came tumbling out of the side entrances, and they rushed toward Joe.

"Where's the fire?" asked the first man, a stout longshoreman.

"In our shop—the ship chandlery."

"What! Starbuck's place?"

"Yes."

The crowd rushed to the door and saw the blaze inside.

Some ran to give the alarm at the nearest engine-house, others ran for buckets, and in a short time a bucket brigade was formed from the edge of the dock opposite to the door of the store, where Joe and several other volunteers received the water and threw it on the fire.

Their efforts were of very little avail, for the blaze had got entirely beyond control by such feeble means.

The fire blazed up on the outside of the back of the building and lighted up the alley and yards there.

It was burning through into the Starbuck living apartments.

The best that the bucket brigade could do was to retard its advance toward the front of the store.

This became more difficult every moment as the smoke increased and drove them back.

Finally they had to quit, as nobody could get within water-throwing distance of the encroaching flames.

"Your store is a goner for sure," said a man to Joe. "Is Mr. Starbuck fully insured?"

"I couldn't tell you. I suppose he is. At any rate, I hope so," replied Joe.

At that juncture the deep-toned fire-bell pealed out its alarm, and a fire-engine came rattling down the street, followed by a hose carriage.

There were no hydrants on Water street.

They were unnecessary, for the engines could pump all the water they wanted out of the harbor.

By the time the first engine arrived and took up its position the whole shop was ablaze from end to end, and smoke was pouring out of the second floor.

There was no other floor, for the ship chandlery establishment was in one of the oldest buildings on the street.

House and ground were owned by Mr. Starbuck, and had been owned by him ever since he acquired the business from his father, over twenty years since.

The entire back of the building was in flames, and the neighborhood was lit up by the blaze.

Intense excitement prevailed, particularly among the tenants in the adjoining buildings, who were hastily gathering up their belongings and carrying them down to the wharves.

A second fire-engine arrived and a hose was stretched in through the alley.

A hook-and-ladder came, and firemen were presently on the roof and in the front of the second floor, where two or three firemen were overcome by the smoke and had to be carried down to the street.

"How did it happen?" somebody asked Joe.

"A couple of boys set the place on fire," said Joe.

"A couple of boys? Who were they?"

"They got away before I could catch them," said the boy, who thought it better not to throw suspicion on the sons of the two fishermen who were in prison until he told his story to the police.

If Glim and Peters learned they were suspected they would

make themselves scarce, and Joe's object was to catch them, though he could not actually swear that they were the ones who started the fire, though he was sure of it himself.

Mr. Starbuck and his wife now arrived on the scene, and one glance was enough to tell them that they were burned out of home and business.

A considerable part of the ship chandler's stock in trade being composed of iron and other metal could not be consumed, but much of it could be ruined for the purpose of sale.

There was a lot of new rope of all sizes which was likely to be ruined, and there were a thousand and one articles of maritime use that would probably be destroyed.

Mr. Starbuck, however, was pretty well insured in a first-class company, so his loss, when adjusted, would not be considerable.

One thing pleased him now, and that was the absence of his curiosities from the window.

He set great store by them, for such a collection could not be soon replaced, and they had always been a great advertisement for him.

The firemen worked like beavers and managed to confine the fire to Starbuck's place, which, however, was pretty well gutted.

They saved about one-third of the front of the store, but the rear and the entire upper floor were cleaned out.

The report that the fire was of incendiary origin reached the ears of the chief, and, following up the statement, found it came from Joe.

The boy was brought before him.

"Did you say that the building was set on fire?" he asked the boy.

"I did. It was, by two boys."

"You saw them in the act?"

"I saw them running away. I was returning home through the alley when they rushed out of the yard, upset me and made their escape. Then I found our back door broken in and the rear of the store on fire."

"Do you know the boys?"

"I think I do."

"Who do you think they were?"

"Glim Sharkey and Pixey Peters, the sons of the two fishermen Mr. Starbuck had arrested for burglarizing the shop. It is my opinion they set the place on fire out of revenge."

The suggestion seemed natural under the circumstances, so the chief called a policeman and sent a note by him to Police Headquarters asking for the immediate arrest of the two boys in question.

The fire was finally extinguished, and then the chief began an investigation at the spot indicated by Joe.

A blackened kerosene oil can was found there, and other evidences of incendiarism.

That satisfied the chief that Joe's story was true.

A couple of firemen were detailed to guard the ruins, by which time most of the crowd had melted away.

Mr. Starbuck took his wife and Joe to a second-class hotel, and there they passed the night, Joe wondering what would be the result of the fire.

CHAPTER VI.

HIS OWN BUSINESS.

The full account of the conflagration was printed in the morning daily, and Mr. Price and his family learned, with regret, that Joe and his relatives had been burned out completely.

"I may now have an opportunity to do something for the boy," he remarked to his wife across the breakfast table.

"You could give him a place in the factory," suggested Mabel.

"Of course, I could do that. But as Mr. Starbuck is quite likely to resume business as soon as he can do so, for he is the only ship chandler in town, and has had a monopoly of the business, and his father before him, for the last sixty years, it is probable that Mr. Starbuck will want to keep him."

"I'd make him an offer, anyway," said Mrs. Price.

"I intend to. I will send for him to-day," said her husband.

After breakfast Joe and Mr. Starbuck visited the burned store.

They found quite a bit of stock, which stood on the front shelves, in salable condition, but it would have to be gone over, for everything was water-soaked.

The office was drenched but not burned.

The place no longer smelled of tar, but of burned wood.

Nothing could be done till the insurance people had looked the place over and estimated the damage.

This was likely to take time.

As Mr. Starbuck was well fixed financially, nothing prevented him from opening and stocking another store if he chose to do so.

The maritime people expected he would do that right away, as a ship chandlery was a necessity in Oldport, and the wonder was that he never had had any opposition.

Probably rivals in his line had looked the field over and figured that Starbuck was so well known that nobody would trade anywhere else.

There was some ground for this conclusion, for the name of Starbuck, ship chandler, was known up and down the New England coast for over fifty years, and the coasting people would hardly trade with anybody else if they could help it.

Joe hung around the ruins after Mr. Starbuck went away to see the manager of the branch office of the insurance company, and about eleven o'clock a boy came up to him and asked if his name was Joe Stanton.

"Yes," said Joe.

"Here's a note for you from Mr. Russell Price," said the youth.

"All right," replied Joe.

He opened the envelope and found a request from the manufacturer for him to call at his office.

Having nothing on his hands, Joe went to the canning house at once.

It was only a block and a half away, up Jefferson street.

He was shown into Mr. Price's private room.

"I'm sorry to hear your place was burned out last night, Stanton," said the gentleman as Joe seated himself.

"Yes, sir; it was quite a fire."

"I understand it was the work of two boys?"

"Yes, sir. I arrived a few minutes too late to catch them at the job. They threw me down in the alley as they rushed away, and I had a glimpse of them—enough to convince me of their identity."

"Who were they?"

"Glim Sharkey and Pixey Peters, sons of the two fishermen who are in jail on the charge of robbing our store the other night."

"They are evidently a pair of young rascals, very like their fathers. Have they been arrested?"

"I don't know, but if they had it is probable the police would have been after me to identify them."

"Maybe they have run away?"

"Then they'd better stay away or they'll go to jail."

"They couldn't have realized what a serious crime they were committing. A man convicted of it would get a long sentence. Well, can I do anything for you? You can have a position in my factory if you wish to accept it."

"Thank you, sir, but I guess Mr. Starbuck will open up again shortly. He would not want me to leave him. I understand the business from the ground floor up, and I am of great assistance to him. As he brought me here when my mother died three years ago, and has treated me well, it wouldn't be fair for me to cut loose from him unless he was willing for me to go."

"That's true, but I wish I could do something for you."

"Perhaps you can some time."

"Then don't fail to call on me."

The interview lasted a while longer, then Joe went around to the station-house to find out whether Glim and Peters had been arrested.

He learned that the two boys had disappeared from their homes, but that officers were out hunting for them.

Several days passed and nothing was done at the burned store.

An adjuster had looked the place over and Mr. Starbuck had supplied the insurance company with a schedule of his stock, as near as he could figure its condition before the fire.

He learned that it might take thirty days to settle the matter, and much longer if any questions rose out of the settlement proposed by the company.

"Mr. Starbuck, instead of starting a new store, decided to take a vacation trip with his wife, Joe to board at his expense at the hotel till further notice."

Joe hung around the burned premises and was interrogated by many persons as to when Mr. Starbuck intended to open up.

Joe was unable to tell them.

Finally Mr. Starbuck and his wife started on their trip.

Two days afterwards Joe learned that a man from Boston

was considering about opening a ship chandler's store in a vacant shop a few doors from the ruins.

The person who told him said that unless Mr. Starbuck started up soon it was sure to hurt his trade, for the shipping people were in many instances greatly inconvenienced by the lack of the goods they were constantly in need of.

Joe was impressed by his statement, and would have written to Mr. Starbuck if he could have reached him; but the ship chandler had not left his route so Joe had to wait till he heard from him.

He called on the insurance manager and asked him when he thought the insurance would be paid, for he believed Mr. Starbuck was holding back for a settlement.

The manager could tell him nothing definite, and probably did not bother much, for he did not recognize the boy as having any particular interest in the issue.

Half a dozen regular customers met Joe and asked him when Mr. Starbuck was going to reopen.

The boy ventured to say very soon in order to satisfy them. Then he got a letter from Mr. Starbuck, post-marked Boston.

The ship chandler said that he and Mrs. Starbuck had decided to go to St. Louis to visit her relatives, and it was probable they would not be back for a month.

Mr. Starbuck said he had written to the proprietor of the hotel where Joe was stopping, telling him to board the boy till further notice at his expense.

Joe was disappointed by the letter.

It would probably be six weeks or two months before the new store would be opened, and if a competitor stepped into the field, as was almost certain, for a ship chandlery was a positive necessity in Oldport, Mr. Starbuck's business was certain to receive a serious setback.

Joe did some serious thinking that day, with the result that he determined to call on Mr. Price and see if he could secure sufficient backing to open a store himself to save Mr. Starbuck's credit.

He called at Mr. Price's house that evening and put the matter before him.

The manufacturer heard his plan, and then said:

"You are thoroughly acquainted with the business, are you?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then why don't you start a store on your own account instead of Mr. Starbuck's. If you will do that I will lend you the necessary capital. I am interested in you, not in Mr. Starbuck."

"It wouldn't be a fair deal. My object is not to take away Mr. Starbuck's trade, but to save it for him," said Joe.

"But I don't care to back Mr. Starbuck. He has ample financial resources to back himself. He has carried on the business in this town long enough to know that the people dependant on him for marine goods cannot wait his pleasure. If he intended to continue in the business he should have started a new store and left it in your charge. Instead of doing so he has left the field open to a competitor. It would be much better for you to step into the breach than allow a stranger to do so. You will have to do it in your own name if you want me to back you."

Joe said it would suit him first rate to start his own business, but he was sure it would greatly offend Mr. Starbuck, who was paying his expenses while he was away.

"Well, you think it over and let me know your decision," said Mr. Price.

Joe spent the rest of the evening in Mabel's company, and when he returned to the hotel he considered Mr. Price's suggestion, but could not decide to adopt it.

It didn't look fair to him.

Still, unless something was done about opening a store, and done right away, somebody else was sure to step into the business.

Next morning he saw an advt. in the paper to the effect that the insurance people were going to sell the goods, damaged and otherwise, of the late store at auction on a certain day, the sale to take place on the ground.

When Joe went to the ruins he found two assistants of the auctioneer going over the stuff and preparing it in lots.

The auctioneer turned up later and, showing Joe his schedule, asked him to fix the lowest value on the different lots.

Joe spent a couple of hours doing so, and having footed up the total sum and made a note of it, he asked the auctioneer if he would dispose of the goods at private sale.

The auctioneer said he would, but he must get a little more than Joe's total called for.

Joe asked him to set his price, and he did so.

Then he called on Mr. Price and asked for a loan of \$100 more than that amount.

"Is this for the purpose of starting the store?"

"Yes, sir, in a small way, until Mr. Starbuck gets back, so as to hold the trade."

"Then you have decided not to open under your own name?"

"Mr. Starbuck's name is a valuable trade-mark. If you help me open the store, perhaps I can induce Mr. Starbuck, when he returns, to give me an interest in the business equal to the sum I wish to borrow of you."

"Well, I'll lend you the money, as I don't want to disappoint you, but I had much rather help you start wholly for yourself," said the manufacturer.

He took Joe's note for the money, drew his check for the sum and handed it to him.

Joe cashed the check, visited the auctioneer and bought out everything in the burned store.

Then he rented the vacant store close by and hired a carpenter to put up some shelves and partition off a small space for an office.

Next he arranged with a sign painter to make a sign reading: "Starbuck's Ship Chandlery," and hang it above the door.

He ordered cards, bill and letter heads from a printer.

The painter furnished him with a temporary announcement on a large sheet of paper to hang in the window which read: "The Starbuck Ship Chandlery business will resume business at this store in a few days."

He wrote to certain business houses in Boston, inclosing an order for certain goods to be delivered at once, signing the letters "Josiah Starbuck, per J. S."

As Mr. Starbuck's credit was good at the merchants he dealt with, there was no question about the orders being filled.

While things were getting in shape, Joe went around and notified all persons interested that the store would open up the first of the ensuing week.

Joe hired a young friend of his named Slater to help him out, and by Saturday night the fresh goods and the old ones, fixed up, were in the new store and the big anchor and heavy pile of chain had been transferred to the new place of business.

The sign had been put in place, and everything was in readiness to open up on Monday morning.

Then the unexpected happened.

On returning to the hotel Joe found a telegram awaiting him.

Opening it, he found it contained startling news.

Mr. Starbuck had died in St. Louis the day after his arrival with his wife, of acute indigestion.

Joe carried the news that evening to Mr. Price.

The Prices were sorry to hear of Mr. Starbuck's death, for he was an old and respected resident of the town.

After a long talk with the manufacturer it was decided that Joe would be quite justified in calling the new ship chandlery his own business.

He knew this would be satisfactory to Mrs. Starbuck, for he stood well in that lady's good graces, and she would be glad to do everything she could to help him get along.

She was well provided for herself, and had the old store not been burned out Joe was satisfied he could have made satisfactory arrangements with her to acquire the business.

So when Joe opened up on Monday morning he regarded the business as his own, and was fully resolved to merit the reputation acquired by the late Mr. Starbuck.

CHAPTER VII.

JOE BUYS A FORTUNE WITHOUT KNOWING IT.

Joe put an advertisement in the morning paper calling attention to the reopening of Starbuck's Ship Chandlery Store close to the old stand, and above the name he put the words, "Established in 1850."

That was the date Mr. Starbuck's father founded the business, and it had been running ever since at the same place up to the time of the fire.

The Oldport Daily News had a column devoted to marine intelligence, and there the arrival of all coasting craft was noted, and what wharf the vessel moored at.

This column was daily consulted by the grocers and other business houses that did business, or hoped to do business, with the vessel.

The first thing Joe did on Monday morning was to look

there and see if any vessels had come in since the previous Saturday.

He found one schooner had, and he immediately sent Slater to leave one of his cards with the captain or mate.

He followed this plan thereafter until all the skippers were informed that Starbuck's ship chandlery store was once more in operation.

He took occasion to notify the Boston merchants the store dealt with for supplies that he had succeeded to the business on such a date.

All bills due before the fire, he told them, would be settled by the estate of Mr. Starbuck, and all goods purchased subsequently would be settled by himself as the new proprietor.

He referred to Mr. Russell Price as to his ability to meet his engagements, and trusted he would receive the same latitude of credit and conditions of payment as had been accorded to the late Mr. Starbuck.

He received replies intimating that his reference would be communicated with, and if everything was satisfactory the same conditions as formerly prevailed would continue in his case.

A week later he got brief notes to the effect that the firms were perfectly satisfied with what they had learned about him, and matters would go on along the lines as per his request until further notice.

About this time Mrs. Starbuck returned from St. Louis with the body of her late husband, who was then buried, with suitable marks of respect, in the ancient Oldport cemetery.

Mr. Starbuck's will appointed his wife sole administrator and executrix of his estate, with his lawyer to act in an advisory capacity.

Joe offered to pay her a small royalty for the use of Mr. Starbuck's name, as she was properly entitled to it, but she would not hear of it.

"If you were a stranger, Joe, I'd take the money, but as you are a relative of Mr. Starbuck, and have been like a son to us since you came here, I would not think of taking a cent from you. I make you a present of the name and the goodwill, and I trust you will do as well in the business as my late husband," she said.

This concession was of great advantage to Joe at the start, for he had to save up the money to pay the note he owed Mr. Price.

Of course, the manufacturer was willing to give him all the time he wanted, but Joe was ambitious to cancel his obligation at the earliest moment possible.

Until that was done he felt he could not conscientiously say that the business was really his own, though, as a matter of fact, the debt had nothing to do with that, for hundreds of people go in debt every day, in one way or another, to start their own business.

But if Joe expected to have smooth sailing he was mistaken.

The death of Mr. Starbuck encouraged the advent of a competitor.

A ship chandler from a smaller seaport town moved to Oldport with the idea of doing better.

He found a store in the next block on the water front and opened up with the usual flourish.

With a rival to divide his trade if he did not look out, Joe felt he must keep wide awake.

Had Mr. Starbuck been alive the competitor would have had a rocky road before him to get customers, but though the shipping community believed that Joe was running the store in the interests of the widow, many persons who had traded at the store heretofore were enticed away by the new man, who offered sundry inducements.

Joe found himself obliged to meet these inducements in order to retain the rest of his trade, and that meant a reduction in his profits.

He missed the attraction of the window full of curiosities, which marked the Starbuck store's individuality as nothing else could, and he was anxious to get the curios back.

He offered to pay Mrs. Starbuck \$100 for them as soon as they were released by the police, explaining to her that they would be the best advertisement he could have.

"You shall have them for nothing, Joe," she told him.

"But I don't want them for nothing, auntie," he said.

He always called her aunt, though she was not so close to him as that.

"You must take them," she insisted.

"Well, I'll tell you what I'll do," he said. "I'll borrow them, and whenever I sell one of them I'll turn the price over to you."

Mrs. Starbuck agreed to that arrangement, somewhat against her will.

Joe called on the prosecuting attorney to find out when the two fishermen would be placed on trial.

He was told that the next term of the Circuit Court would open at Oldport on the following week, and that when the date of the trial was set he would be notified.

A month had now elapsed since the fire and Glim Sharkey and Pixey Peters had not been caught.

Their flight confirmed the impression of their guilt, and the members of the fishing hamlet wondered where they had gone to.

Mrs. Sharkey and Mrs. Peters, with younger children, continued to live in the two cabins on the shelf, and they were not having an easy time getting food for themselves, now that the heads of the households were in jail, with every chance of going to State prison.

The women of the colony, while they did not cotton to the Sharkeys and Peters women, felt a sympathy for them in their distress, and supplied them with food from time to time, while a subscription was taken up to pay their dues to the co-operative store and established a credit fund there for them to draw upon.

The two women were very bitter against the late Mr. Starbuck and Joe Stanton, for they regarded those two as the authors of their misfortunes.

They insisted that their husbands were not guilty of the burglary, and they were equally insistent that their sons had had nothing to do with the fire, though they had no explanation to offer for the disappearance of Glim and Pixey.

They claimed that they had no knowledge of the present whereabouts of the boys, but did not appear to be greatly worried about it.

Dick Slater was an amateur printer and had a small hand-press and a stock of type at his house which he had used to get out a small four-page miniature paper, but after he had issued three numbers he got tired of the fun and quit.

Joe got him to bring his printing outfit to the store and put in his spare time printing circulars and price-lists for the business.

Then it occurred to Joe to get out a small marine shipping list, which he got out twice a week, with all the marine news, which he copied from a Boston daily, together with the arrivals and departures of coasters at Oldport, and other information connected with the shipping trade.

He went around and got all the tradesmen dealing with the marine people to advertise in it.

The size of the sheet was eight by twelve, printed on one side only, and he distributed it free all along Water street and neighboring blocks.

The boy who delivered it was instructed to tack it up on the walls where anybody could see it, and the idea took immensely.

About this time the trial of Sharkey and Peters came on.

Joe was the chief witness against them, and they were convicted.

As it was their first offense they received a sentence of only one year.

After the trial was over Joe recovered the curiosities on an order from Mrs. Starbuck, and he displayed them in his window in the same manner as they were formerly shown in the old shop.

One day a sailor entered the ship chandlery with a small box.

"Is Mr. Starbuck around?" he asked.

"No," replied Joe, "Mr. Starbuck, I regret to say, is dead."

"Dead! That's too bad," said the visitor. "How long has he been dead?"

"Not quite two months."

"The store is moved, I see. I heard the old one was burned down."

"Yes, it was burned a short time before Mr. Starbuck died."

"I noticed that the old building was gone, and men were clearing out a lot of burned wood and pulling down the front. Well, well, things do change in this world! I recollect you as the old man's assistant, but you don't seem to remember me."

"Can't say that I do. It must be some time since you were in here."

"Two years and a half. My name is Bob Baxter. I've been in the Injees, and have picked up several curiosities I intended to sell to Mr. Starbuck. I've sold him quite a few in my time. That there war-club in the window I fetched from the Friendly Islands. And that there boomerang I picked up from a Maori in West Australy. Them arrers and that there bow I fetched from Borneo," and Baxter went on

picking out several other curiosities he had sold to the late ship chandler.

"What have you got now?" said Joe. "I'll buy anything you have if you don't ask too much."

"I'll show you, and perhaps we can strike a bargain. I'd rather sell them to you than any one else, for I brought them on purpose for Mr. Starbuck. He always told me to be sure and bring something with me when I came back home."

Baxter said he had arrived in Boston three days before, and as soon as he got his pay he took the first train for Oldport.

He opened the box and took out a pill-box containing a black pearl.

"I guess we can't dicker on this. It's worth money, and only a jeweler will pay what it's worth. Black pearls are rare and more valuable than the ordinary kind. Pink and golden pearls are the next valuable. If this was perfectly round and without any flaw I could get enough for it to settle down for the rest of my life. No jeweler can skin me on them, for I know about what they're worth."

"Where did you pick it up?" said Joe, much interested.

"On the shore at Ceylon, in an oyster what had been washed up somehow on the beach. That don't often happen, for to get the oysters the natives have to dive for 'em and pick 'em off the rocks."

Baxter put the pill-box in his pocket and then brought out an ugly little Hindoo image, about two inches high.

"You can have that for a quarter, and its mate for the same price," he said.

Joe said he'd take them, for he guessed he could sell them to a summer visitor for double the money.

"Here's a small crease," said the sailor, showing a dagger with a sinuous or wavy blade, somewhat resembling a corkscrew that had been flattened out. "I picked that up in a town cheap, but I want \$2 for it."

Joe would give but 75 cents for it, and got it for that.

A few other small Indian curios were brought to light and Joe bought them.

Then came the last—a papier-mache head of a fierce-looking Malay.

It was about six inches high, and round in proportion.

"What'll you give for that?" said Baxter. "That'll attract attention in your window."

"What do you want for it?"

"It's worth \$5," said the sailor.

"I can't afford to give any such price," said Joe.

"Well, name a figger."

"Two dollars and a half."

"Seeing it's you, Mr. Baxter, we'll let it go at that."

The total of all the articles was footed up and Joe paid the sailor, who took his leave shortly afterward.

Joe entered his purchases in his book, with the cost of each.

He ticketed all but the head double and stood them in the window.

"I don't believe anybody will give \$5 for this head," he said, regarding it meditatively. "I don't believe it's worth a cent more than I gave for it, and I doubt if I could get that for it. I'll keep it to attract the curious and mark it \$50 to give the impression that it's something out of the usual."

He put it in the center of the window with a card reading, "Price, \$50."

He little knew that he had bought a fortune for \$2.50, nor dreamed that three noughts added to the \$50 would more fittingly express the value of that villainous-looking head, and yet Bob Baxter had bought it in Calcutta for the equivalent of twenty cents.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE BRIG THAT WENT ASHORE.

Joe managed to hold his own against his competitor, for he made it his business to keep everything that was likely to be called for, and his three years' experience with Mr. Starbuck gave him a line on all that was needed by the maritime community.

His books showed a good profit, and his occasional report to Mr. Price showed that he was getting on all right.

He regarded the Starbuck trade-mark as half the battle in his favor, for two-thirds of the coasting people wouldn't buy at any other store but his.

They had been accustomed for years to go to "Starbuck's," and when a person is accustomed to trading at one place, and is well suited there, it's hard to entice him away.

Under these circumstances Joe's rival was not pulling out as well as he had expected when he opened up.

Joe had been in his own business about three months and the summer season was in full swing when an unexpected gale came on one Saturday night, and converted the shore for miles around Oldport into a seething mass of foam and spray.

A foreign-built brig, bound for Boston, and driven far out of her course, went ashore among the rocks a mile to the westward of the fishing hamlet, and the only person who escaped was a swarthy man, with earrings in his ears, who claimed to be the captain and owner.

He gave his name as Antonio Crespi, and said the brig had sailed from Leghorn on a certain date, and was consigned to Brown & Co., of Boston.

All the men of the fishing hamlet went over to the rocks to look at the brig, which was a total wreck, though the hull held together.

The news of the loss of the brig was telegraphed to Brown & Co., and a representative of the firm came down and viewed her, after talking to Captain Crespi.

Then the insurance men came and looked at her, and arrangements were made to save some of her cargo.

Before anything could be done in this line the brig broke in two and her stern sank, while the tide made havoc with the rest of the cargo.

Captain Crespi, who had appeared nervous and ill at ease up to that point, recovered his spirits and departed for Boston.

The underwriters advertised the wreck to be sold as it stood.

Several persons, including Joe, put in bids.

The young ship chandler got the wreck.

He took a sloop to the spot, with several men, early in the morning, and by sundown the sloop, with what was left of the brig on board, was moored at the wharf opposite the store.

The planks were piled in front of the store and offered for sale as firewood, while the bolts, pieces of metal, rope and blocks were stowed in the store.

The forward windlass was among his salvage, and he stood it under the window outside, with a price on it.

Among other things brought to town by Joe were half a dozen cases, very heavy, of the brig's cargo, which he had found imbedded in the sand.

He could only claim salvage of the cases, for they had formed part of the brig's cargo, as he had bought nothing but the wreck of the vessel, so he notified the underwriters.

A man came down, made a note of the markings, compared them with the brig's manifest, or description of her cargo, estimated their value, paid Joe a good price, and ordered the cases shipped to Boston.

Altogether, the young ship chandler figured that the late gale had proved quite profitable to him.

Two days later, to his surprise, a man came down and told him he was wanted in Boston to testify to the finding of the cases.

The men he had employed on the wreck were also wanted.

"I can't go to Boston very well, for I have my store to look after," said Joe. "What testimony am I required to give? You people got all I found and have settled with me for them."

"It is necessary you should appear with your men before the underwriters. All expenses will be paid, and you and the men will be reimbursed for your time," said the agent.

So Joe put his store in charge of Dick for the day, as he had done when he went to the wreck, rounded up his late helpers, and the whole party went to Boston.

They were taken to the building where the underwriters were in session, and were closely questioned concerning the finding of the cargo.

The proceedings did not take long.

Their testimony, after being taken down, was typewritten and they signed it.

Joe was paid \$10 for his time and the men got \$3 each.

The young ship chandler felt that he was \$10 in, but he was much mystified by the proceedings, which appeared superfluous to him.

He changed his mind when he saw the Boston paper next morning.

It contained a sensational story about the brig.

Captain Crespi had been arrested on the double charge of working off false items on his manifest, and wrecking the vessel deliberately.

The last was only an inference founded on the first.

The cases Joe saved from the shore were, from the markings, supposed to contain expensive shawls, whereas on being

opened they proved to be filled with old Government reports and other valueless matter.

Twelve cases with these markings, all presumed to be packed with shawls, were in the cargo and specially insured in the captain's name.

A high value was placed on them, and this would have been paid but that the boy found the six cases, and, when opened, the exposure followed.

As there would have been no profit in landing the cases at Boston, for their contents were not worth as much as the cases themselves, it seemed clear that the skipper had wrecked the brig designedly to get rid of them and collect their supposed value from the insurance company.

He took his own life in his hands doing this in the gale, but it was believed he had taken special precautions in the shape of life-preservers to save himself, leaving the rest of the ship's company to shift for themselves.

At his examination before the United States court he pleaded not guilty to both charges, claiming that there was a mistake in the markings.

His plea was not taken seriously and he was held under heavy bail, which he couldn't furnish and was sent to jail.

We may as well say here that the underwriters secured evidence enough in Leghorn to convict him, ultimately, and he got what he deserved.

Altogether, Joe came out considerable ahead on this incident, enough, in fact, to square his indebtedness to Mr. Price, for the underwriters voted him a reward for saving the insurance company from a heavy loss on the twelve cases.

This put the young ship chandler squarely on his feet considerably quicker than he had counted on, and naturally he felt greatly elated.

He sold a number of his curiosities to the summer visitors at good prices, and the money from those belonging to Mr. Starbuck he turned over to the widow, who accepted it with some reluctance.

The season was on the wane when he received an offer of \$25 for the Malay's head.

A wealthy bachelor took a fancy to it and wanted it for his private den.

Had the offer come earlier he would have jumped at it, but not needing the money particularly, he hesitated about selling it, though there was a profit of \$22.50 in the offer, and he knew he was hardly likely to get such a good offer again.

After considering the matter, he told his customer that if he would leave his address he would let him know later on.

The gentleman did so and departed for Boston.

Thus Joe nearly lost the fortune he was unaware he possessed.

The shipping sheet had proved so popular with the people who received it for nothing that Joe increased its size, got more advertisements, and charged fifty cents a month to pay for sending it around.

As an offset to this charge he had neat frames made to hold it, and each subscriber was furnished with one of them.

He added to the shipping news notices of daily events to take place in town and had it printed three times a week instead of twice.

Dick's amateur press couldn't handle the enlarged sheet, so Joe bought a bigger one of the same make, and such additional type as Dick said he needed.

He gave Dick the privilege of printing jobs himself at night, and in this way his assistant made as much or more at night as he got from Joe.

Thus both boys were getting on famously, each in his own particular groove.

Six months had now elapsed since the fire and the young rascals responsible for it were still among the missing at Oldport.

Joe often wondered where they had gone to, and once in a while questioned some member of the fishing hamlet on the subject, but he could get no information, for no one appeared to know anything about the whereabouts of Glim and Peters.

Mabel Price and Joe had become very warm friends and every pleasant Sunday went out walking or riding together.

Usually, Joe hired a horse at the stable near his store and rode to the Price house after dinner, for Mabel preferred horseback riding to carriage riding, and whatever suited the young lady was all right with the young ship chandler.

On the first Sunday in September, Joe and Mabel rode over to the cliffs where they had made each other's acquaintance.

They tied their animals in the little wood and walked the rest of the way to the rocks.

After looking down at the fishing hamlet they continued

their stroll to the spot where the foreign brig came ashore in the summer gale.

Here the surf was beating strong on the rocks, though the weather was very fine that afternoon.

Almost unconsciously they continued their walk further on, climbing the higher cliff that jutted out into the sea at this point.

Turning a corner of the rocks they unexpectedly came face to face with two hard-looking men and two boys who were playing cards at a smooth stone in front of a dark, cavernous opening.

The four sprang up—the men with imprecations, and the boys with exclamations of surprise and dismay.

Joe recognized the boys as Glim and his friend Peters.

The men were strangers to him.

Such company was not to the liking of either Joe or Mabel and they started to make a hurried retreat, but one of the men, with a spring, barred their escape.

"Don't be in such a hurry," said the man, roughly. "We don't often have visitors, especially a young gent and young lady like yourselves. Come, now, let's know who you are."

"We don't care to stay here," said Joe, curtly, as Mabel held nervously on his arm.

"You don't, eh? What did you come for, then? We didn't invite you."

"We didn't suppose any one was here."

"You see we're here, and as this here is our private parlor you'd better stay awhile and rest yourselves."

"No, we're not going to stay."

"I think you'll stay if we want you to. We're the bosses of this situation."

"How dare you interfere with our movements!" demanded Joe, in a resolute tone.

The man laughed in an ugly way.

"We dare do a whole lot. You're some distance from town, and if you yelled yourselves hoarse nobody but the seagulls would hear you."

"What's your object in detaining us. You'll only get into trouble. This young lady is the daughter of one of the first men in town, and if you got him after you you'd be sorry."

"What's the young lady's name, and what's yours?"

"Our names needn't worry you," replied Joe.

"Do you know these two, Sharkey?" asked the man of Glim.

"I'll bet I do, and so does Pixey," returned the youth.

"Who are they?"

"That gal's name is Price. Her father owns the cannin' house in town. The feller is Joe Stanton. He's the chap who sent our old men to prison."

"This boy sent your old men to prison?" said the man.

"Yep. He belongs to the Starbuck ship chandlery. He's runnin' the shop now since the boss turned up his toes."

"So this is the chap you told us about—the feller you two want to get square with. What luck! You've got the chance now, and Hobson and me'll help you settle your score."

"We ain't got nothin' ag'in the gal," said Glim.

"Who said you had?"

"We can't do nothin' with her around."

"Don't worry about her. We'll hold on to her while you're putting it over the feller you owe so much to."

"Look here, my man, you're inviting trouble on yourself," said Joe. "This is very much like a hold-up, and the law makes it hot for people who indulge in that kind of recreation."

"We ain't worrying about the law. We're our own bosses out here, and do as we please. Get a piece of line and tie up this chap. He talks a bit too gay to suit me."

Joe saw that he and Mabel were in for trouble, and he decided that if anything was to be done it must be done at once, and in a decided way.

With such odds against him the chances of being able to get away were very doubtful, but at least he would make the best effort he could.

The other man went to find a piece of line, and the two boys stood grinning several feet away.

Only the man who had done the talking stood between them and possible escape.

And he was a rough and tough party who could not be easily brushed aside.

It was tackle him or give in like a lamb.

There was nothing of the lamb about Joe when he was driven into a corner.

And now he had Mabel Price to protect, and that appealed to his chivalry.

He made a bluff to sidestep the ruffian, as if his purpose was to go around him.

The rascal moved to prevent this, with a sardonic grin on his face.

Joe's move brought him within reach of the man, and quick as a flash he struck out at his chin with all his force.

The blow took effect, for the fellow was unprepared for such a thing, and he staggered back a couple of feet with a fierce imprecation.

Giving him no time to recover, Joe followed him up with a blow under the ear, delivered with his left fist.

Almost at the same time the young ship chandler uppercut him under the chin with his right, again.

The whole thing was done so quick that the fellow was thrown into confusion, and, trodding on a round stone, he slipped, fell on the shelving rock and fell over down into the bushes that screened a kind of gully.

The bushes parted as his body struck them and he disappeared with a cry.

CHAPTER IX.

THE YACHT ADRIFT.

The result had been accidental and quite unexpected on Joe's part.

The best he had aimed for by his desperate attack was to secure an opening by which he and Mabel could run for it.

He intended to cover the girl's retreat by fighting off the ruffian.

Now the rascal was effectually disposed of—possibly killed by his fall—and the path was clear before them.

"Come, Mabel, we'll have to run like fun," he said, grabbing her by the hand.

They started off around the rocks just as Glim and Peters gave a startled yell at the fate which had overtaken the man.

That brought the other fellow back on the run, but by the time he had learned what had happened, Joe and Mabel had secured a start of a hundred yards, and were going as fast as they could in the direction of the fishing hamlet.

Mabel could run some, and Joe encouraged her to do her best, for he believed the other man and the two boys would give them immediate chase.

This proved right, though Glim and Peters made no effort to get ahead of the man, as they might have done, for he was no great runner; but after the evidence Joe had given of his prowess, they had no wish to run up against him by themselves.

In consequence, the pursuit was not as hot as it might have been, and the fugitives managed to keep well in the lead.

The chase continued for a quarter of a mile and was then abandoned.

Mabel was quite exhausted when Joe eased up and told her that the danger appeared to be over.

"Dear me, what awful men they were!" she said. "And those two boys, they did look like wild ones."

"Those boys are Glim Sharkey and Pixey Peters, the ones who set Mr. Starbuck's store on fire, and for whom the police were looking for for some time. I believe they've been hiding out here ever since they disappeared from their homes," said Joe.

"My gracious! Is that possible? Now that you know where they are you can tell the police," she said.

"Now that they are aware I have discovered their hiding-place they are not likely to wait around this neighborhood for the police to come after them."

"They are very bad boys. My father said they ought to be in some house of correction."

"They'll get there, or in prison, one of the two, before they are much older."

"You have no idea who the men were?"

"No. They were strangers around here. How long they have been with the boys it's hard to say."

"What do you suppose happened to the man you hit, and who fell off the rock? He gave an awful yell as he fell. Do you think he went all the way down to the shore?"

"I don't know; but if he did the chances are he's a dead man now."

"That would be an awful fate for him."

"He invited it. I don't know what they intended to do with me, but I can safely say they'd have used me roughly, for Glim and Pixey are down on me hard. I should feel very sorry if I were the cause of the man's death, but I had to defend you as well as myself. They probably would not have hurt you, but as you would have been in the way they probably would have tied you up and gagged you to stifle

your screams. That would have been outrage enough. If the man's body is found on the rocks I'll give myself up to the police, and you will be my witness that I acted to save ourselves from rough-house treatment."

"But you wouldn't be punished for that," said Mabel, looking a bit startled at the idea of Joe being under arrest for causing the death of a man.

"I don't suppose I would. Your father would see me through."

"Of course he would. I would tell just why you had to strike the man."

"I didn't push him off the rock. He slipped and fell off himself. I never expected such an ending to the scrap I started."

By this time they reached the wood, found their animals where they had left them, mounted and rode toward the town.

Mr. and Mrs. Price were on the veranda when they arrived, and quite unprepared for the exciting story both had to tell.

"I must go to the station-house right away," said Joe, "and start the police after those boys and the man. They will probably find the other fellow badly hurt if he was lucky enough to escape with his life."

Joe went directly to Police Headquarters and told his story.

"If you want me," he concluded, "you'll find me at Mr. Price's house until some time in the evening, and after that I'll be at my lodgings. Here is my address," and the young ship chandler wrote down the street and number of the cottage where he was boarding, for he had left the hotel when he opened up his own business.

Three officers were sent out on the cliffs and Joe returned to Mr. Price's.

The police found no trace of the two boys or the men, though they discovered plenty of evidence that showed the cave in the rocks had been occupied as a house for some time past.

The rocks were searched for the body of the rascal who tumbled off the cliff, but no body, nor evidences of a tragedy, was found.

The conclusion reached was that the fellow had escaped with his life.

There was a shelf under the bushes where he had probably fallen, and lay stunned for a while.

From there it was not hard to regain the top of the cliff.

So the officers had to return and report their non-success.

A reporter from the News got the facts off the police blotter, and then he called at the Price house to obtain further details.

He got a graphic story from Joe, with sundry additions from Mabel.

The story duly appeared in next morning's paper and attracted considerable attention in the town, from the fact that Miss Price was an actor in it.

That day Joe had a number of visitors who were curious to hear the facts from himself.

The authorities of all the neighboring towns were notified to look out for the two men and their boy companions, but as time passed no arrests were reported.

"Glim and Pixey have got luck in keeping out of the hands of the police," Joe said to his assistant, Dick.

"They certainly have. I don't see how they do it," returned Dick.

"They've found a new hiding-place somewhere and are keeping to it. If they showed themselves they'd surely be recognized and caught."

"But they have to eat. They can't live on wind-pudding."

"I daresay they steal from the farms."

"They can't keep that up without getting caught."

"While they were hiding in that cave they managed to find grub for they did not look starved out to me."

"I'll bet they sneaked to their homes at night and their mothers provided for them. How far is that cave from the hamlet?"

"A little over a mile."

"That wasn't far for them to go and come after dark."

"They might have a new hiding-place not much farther off. I'll put the police up to your suggestion. By having the shelf watched at night the boys may be caught."

Joe was as good as his word.

The police thought the idea a reasonable one, and an officer in plain clothes was detailed to go out to the cliff that night and lay for the boys.

This scheme was maintained for a week, and when it proved barren of results it was abandoned.

There was a lighthouse on a small island half a mile outside Oldport harbor, and Joe sometimes furnished odds and ends to the headkeeper.

One morning the assistant keeper came ashore and called at Joe's store.

He wanted several things, including a coil of small rope.

Joe was out of that particular rope, but promised to get it.

He sent Dick to his competitor to see if he had any.

He had some, but declined to sell it to Joe except at the regular price which would leave the boy no margin of profit. Besides, he wouldn't sell the quantity Joe wanted.

"If you want it you've got to take all I have," said the man.

"Going out of business?" grinned Dick.

"No, I'm not going out of business," snapped the man. "For saying that I won't sell you a foot of the line."

"Oh, all right. I guess we can get along without it. You've sent to us several times for stuff and we've let you have it at cost to give you the chance to make something. That's what you ought to do with us. I believe in fair play."

"Bah!" ejaculated the man, who was in bad humor.

So Dick returned to the store and reported the discourteous treatment he had received at the rival store.

When the lighthouse man returned Joe told him he couldn't get the rope, but would telegraph to Boston for some to come down by express, and would fetch it off to the lighthouse as soon as he got it, which he expected would be next day.

The rope came down by the eleven o'clock train, Joe measured off the quantity ordered and after dinner he borrowed a sailboat and started for the lighthouse.

He ran alongside the landing, tied the boat and took the coil of rope to the open door of the ground floor of the tall shaft which flashed a revolving light at night.

The assistant keeper met him and signed the receipt for the rope.

"If you want to see Gray," that was the headkeeper, "you'll find him up in the lantern fixing one of the prisms," said the assistant.

"I'll run up a minute," said Joe.

He followed a circular flight of iron steps up.

At each floor a door marked a landing.

The circular stairs ended at a door which opened into the machinery room under the lantern.

An iron ladder pointed the way further up.

Joe found the headkeeper busy at work.

After talking to him a few minutes Joe went out on the gallery and walked around, taking in the view on all sides. Shoreward, the town lay spread out in the afternoon sunshine.

The smoke from half a dozen factories was blowing inland.

The harbor, or rather roadstead, formed an indentation in the shape of a crescent.

To the eastward it rose inward, while to the westward lay the line of cliffs, with the fishing hamlet.

The rest of the landscape was nothing but sky and water.

Drifting down the coast, with a slant toward the shore, was a small sloop yacht.

As far as Joe could see there was nobody on board of her.

About two feet of her mainsail flapped in the wind above the boom, while the unsecured jib hung down toward the water.

She looked as if she had broken loose from her mooring, and Joe called the headkeeper to look at her.

He agreed that she had broken adrift, and he suggested that Joe put off to her in his boat and tow her into Oldport.

"You'll be entitled to salvage for picking her up. If she was allowed to keep on the way she's heading she'd fetch up on the rocks where the foreign brig went ashore."

Joe delayed till the craft got close in, then he put off and ran alongside of her.

Dropping his sail and boarding her, he found the sliding cabin door half open.

He looked in, expecting to find somebody asleep on one of the lockers, but the cabin was only occupied by a lot of boxes and bags that looked out of place there.

She was a trim little craft, built for pleasure, and had lots of "gingerbred" ornamentation about her.

The cabin was painted in white and gold, with sundry brass trimmings.

A brass-mounted telescope was suspended across two brass hooks.

A brass-tipped chronometer hung near the door.

Under the skylight swung a brass-rimmed tray containing a decanter of liquor and eight glasses marked with a monogram.

A centerboard casing obstructed the center of the cabin, and on either side of it was a long flap which, when elevated horizontally, formed a table.

Everything looked ship-shape except the boxes and bags,

which seemed to have been thrown in at haphazard in a hurry. Joe ventured to examine some of the boxes and found they bore shipping-marks, such as, "From Davis & Co., Boston," in one corner, followed by the address of the firm of "Havens, True & Co., 16 North Main street, Gloucester, Mass."

The bags were tied at their mouths with yarn.

One was open and Joe looked into it.

It was stuffed with bolts of silk in the original package, with the foreign manufacturer's label in gold.

To say the truth, Joe thought the presence of this cargo on board such a craft looked queer.

After seeing all he wanted of the cabin, he went on deck, worked his sailboat forward, attached a tow-line to a cleat in her stern, got over into her, hoisted his mainsail and started in for the town.

A flash of light from the top of the lighthouse attracted his attention to the gallery.

There he saw the headkeeper watching him through a spy-glass.

Waving his arm, he grabbed the tiller and put his own boat on her course.

CHAPTER X.

JOE'S COMPETITOR GOES TO THE WALL.

Joe reached the wharf near his store in due time and secured both boats.

He locked the yacht's cabin with the padlock that hung at the door and put the key in his pocket.

After telling Dick about the yacht he had picked up adrift he went to the station-house and reported the matter.

When he mentioned the strange cargo she carried the officer at the desk pricked up his ears and looked interested.

A policeman was detailed to visit the little vessel with him.

Joe unlocked the cabin and showed him what was inside.

The moment the man saw the address on one of the boxes he slapped Joe on the back.

"Young man," he said, "you've done a good job in bringing her in here."

"Yes, I think I have. I've secured a claim against her for salvage."

"Well, I don't know anything about that. What I do know is that these are stolen goods."

"Stolen goods!" exclaimed Joe.

"We've been advised that Havens, True & Co., of Gloucester, was robbed last night of two or three thousand dollars' worth of merchandise, which is believed to have been carried away by water. The address on those boxes show they belong to that firm, which is in the dry goods business, so there's no doubt we have got hold of the stolen property. A reward of \$1,000 is offered for the capture of the thieves and the recovery of the goods. You didn't catch the crooks, but you've got hold of the goods, so you should be entitled to a part of the reward, at any rate. I'll take charge of the boat. Have you a telephone in your store?"

"No. You can find one at the saloon down the block."

The policeman locked the cabin and went to the saloon in question to communicate with the station-house, while Joe went back to his shop, quite elated at the prospect of getting a part of the reward.

The story came out in next morning's paper, and once more Joe figured prominently in the press.

A representative of Havens, True & Co. appeared about nine, and after calling on the police, and visiting the yacht, where he identified the firm's property, he visited Joe in his store.

After hearing the boy's story from his own lips he told him that he would be suitably rewarded.

He nor the police could conjecture how the yacht came to be adrift.

Joe's own theory was that the thieves had put in at some unfrequented cove for some purpose and went ashore.

While they were away the yacht, having been insecurely tied, had been pulled away by the ebbing tide.

Then she had drifted up the coast.

Such an elegant little craft was not believed to have been the property of the thieves.

The inference was they had stolen her from her anchorage and her owner would soon be heard from.

Against him Joe had a well-founded claim for recompense by picking the boat up adrift with no one on board.

Thus the young ship chandler had another reward coming to him.

If the owner objected to paying him a reasonable sum the boy could easily attach her, according to maritime law, and then he could claim the legal compensation in accordance with her appraised value.

"Things seem to be coming my way since I went into business," he told Mr. Price that evening. "My store is panning out first-rate. I owe nothing but the running accounts with the Boston wholesale people in my line, and I have a balance in the savings bank. I'm doing pretty well for a boy."

"You are doing well for a man," said the manufacturer. "Of course, you have had the advantage of stepping into the good will of an established business, which has cost you nothing, but still you might have run the business in the ground if you didn't know how to handle it right."

"I can handle it all right. That side issue of mine—the Oldport Marine Register—is paying me quite a profit now. It wasn't a bad idea."

"Not at all. It was quite clever of you to think of it."

"I've got 100 regular subscribers at fifty cents a month. That pays all expenses, so what I receive from the advertisers is clear profit. Having a small printing plant in my place enables me to advertise myself in lots of ways that I couldn't afford if I had to pay a regular printer for the work. Dick Slater likes to monkey with the type and run the press. It's a fad with him, and so I have a cinch in that line."

A few days later the owner of the yacht turned up and claimed his boat.

The police informed him that Joe Stanton had a claim of salvage on it.

He called on Joe and the young ship chandler told him how he found the yacht drifting ashore with stolen goods on board of it, and he had towed her to the wharf where it now lay in charge of the authorities.

"How much do you think you are entitled to?" said the owner.

"According to maritime law I am entitled to quite a sum, but I'll let you off for \$100," replied the boy.

The gentleman paid him the amount and then recovered his boat from the police.

He told Joe that the yacht was stolen from her anchorage at Marblehead about a week before.

Shortly afterward Joe received a check from Havens, True & Co. for \$500 in recognition of his recovery of the stolen goods.

Joe's savings bank bank-book totaled the sum of \$800.

His business was in a flourishing condition, and his only debts were what he owed the wholesale merchants in Boston, and that wasn't a whole lot, for he settled his accounts regularly every thirty days.

His promptness in making remittances gave him a considerable larger margin of credit than he required, and so everything went easy with him.

He made some changes in his Marine Register which improved it, and none of his subscribers would have given it up now if he had raised the price.

It was about this time that Joe's competitor decided to give up in Oldport.

He found he couldn't make any headway against the hustling ship chandler.

A good bit of the trade Joe lost at first had come back to him, and his rival found that things were going to the bad with him.

He called around to see Joe, and offered to sell out to him.

The young ship chandler went around to see his stock, and finally made him a bid on it.

His bid was low and the man said he might as well give it away as to take him up.

"I admit it's low, but there is a lot of stuff in your place that I don't want, because I'm supplied for months ahead on it. It would lie around on my shelves for a year or two, some of it. If you'll let me take my pick of what I can work off in the regular course of business I'll give you a better figure on them."

"That wouldn't do at all, for then the rest of my stock would have to go to auction and would fetch very little. If you won't pay more I'll sell everything at auction and that will hurt your trade for several months."

"I can't stop you doing what you want to with your own goods. I won't give any more than I said."

So the proposed deal was off, and in the course of a month his competitor advertised an auction sale of his stock on certain day.

The auctioneer hung out his red flag and a bunch of pees gathered at the shop, among them Joe himself.

He proved to be the only important bidder, and he bought only what was most salable.

The stuff that he didn't care to sink money in went for a mere song, and Dick, acting in unison with himself, bought some of it in.

About a third of the stuff was captured by a junk-dealer, and in the end Joe's business rival found he would have done better if he had taken up with the boy's offer.

Thus Starbuck's Ship Chandlery resumed its former status of the only marine establishment in town.

As a matter of fact, the town could only support one in good shape.

Winter passed, and with the advent of spring Bill Sharkey and Jim Peters, having behaved themselves in prison, were released ahead of their time, and they returned to their families, looking much better than when they went away.

While in prison they had learned that their sons were accused of burning down the Starbuck Ship Chandlery, and had skipped the fishing hamlet.

As the fishing season would soon begin, their return was hailed with joy by their wives, who had experienced a hard time in scratching along, with the help their neighbors had accorded them.

Sharkey and Peters had it in for Joe, but they did not know how they could get square with him without getting into trouble again, and they had no wish to go back to prison for a longer term, which they would certainly get if they were convicted of a second offence.

They were disgusted to learn that Joe had succeeded as proprietor to the Starbuck establishment, and was doing fine.

Two weeks after obtaining their freedom they were visited by a crook whose acquaintance they had made in prison and had grown quite thick with him.

This chap proposed that Sharkey and Peters go in with him on a housebreaking job in town.

The fishermen declined, on the ground that they were being watched by the authorities, and they were sure if they made any suspicious move the fact would be noted.

"Well, what are you going to do to live?" asked the crook.

"Take up fishin' ag'in in a couple of weeks," said Peters.

"That's what you did before you got in trouble, and you told me it didn't pay more than half the time."

"We might have made it pay if we attended to business right along."

"Why didn't you?"

"Because we got disgusted at the way the world treated us and others who are down on their luck, and so we got to drinkin' more than was good for us, and lost many days' work on the fishin'-ground."

"What did you do with your fish when you caught them?"

"Sold the mackerel to Price, the canning man, and other fish to the market. When the market was glutted, as it often was, we got so little for our hard labor that it made us sick."

"Then when fishing is good you get a low price, and when it's poor you don't catch enough to make much off the high price. Is that it?"

"That's it," nodded Sharkey, with a gloomy frown.

"And that's liable to happen this season, isn't it?"

"It might, but we intend to work steadily and try and make out."

"Oh, you do? What's the most you can make if you have luck?"

After some figuring the fishermen gave their opinion.

"And it will take you from now till along in the fall to do that?"

The fishermen admitted it would.

"Well, you come in with me and I'll guarantee you'll make more out of one job than you'll make working hard all season."

The fishermen shook their heads.

"You needn't tackle but one job," persisted the crook. "After we pull it off you can take up with your fishing just as you have decided to do."

"It's too risky," said Peters.

"Nothing ventured, nothing gained in this world," said the crook. "The rich-bugs who come down here and make a show with their families in the summer make their money, many of them, in ways that wouldn't stand in the searchlight. You see them dropping their coin around and you feel sore against the world. You are wrong. It is the clever chaps who get ahead. You could do the same if you had the right term."

"Ain't you afraid of goin' back to prison yourself with a term?" said Sharkey.

"Not at all. Every business has its risks. Suppose in your business you're caught off shore in a gale, you're liable to be swamped and lose your lives. Ain't that a fact?"

The fishermen admitted that it was.

"Very good," argued the crook. "You don't take no such risk as that cracking a crib. If you know your business it's easy. I'm an expert and you're safe enough if you stand in with me."

The fishermen were not convinced, but to gain time they promised to consider their friend's proposition.

"Now," said Sharkey, "maybe you kin tell us how to get square with the chap who put us behind the bars, without gettin' in trouble."

The crook asked for full particulars.

Then he said:

"You help me and I'll help you."

After some hesitation a bargain was struck between them and soon afterward the crook went away, saying he would see them on the following day.

CHAPTER XI.

THE ROBBERY.

On the following Sunday, Joe and Mabel went out riding, but rain coming on, they had to hurry home.

Joe put his horse in the Price stable while he remained to tea and to spend the evening.

Mr. Price was away on business and was not expected back for a couple of days.

The rain continued all evening and Joe was invited to spend the night.

He accepted when Mabel said that, as her father being away, his presence in the house would be much appreciated.

At eleven o'clock the family retired for the night, and Joe was shown to a large back room overlooking the kitchen ell.

The rain was pattering on the window when he turned in. He lay awake a while, listening to it, and then he fell asleep.

Shortly afterward the rain stopped and the clouds began to clear away.

Along about two in the morning three men came into the grounds of the Price property over the back fence.

They approached the house, and one of them pointed at the window of the room where Joe was at that moment sleeping.

From under the stable a short ladder was pulled and placed against the side of the kitchen.

Before proceeding further one of the men was sent out in front to take a look around.

He returned and reported the street to be deserted.

"This job ought to be easy," said the voice of the crook. "Price is away in Boston, and there's nobody but women in the house—two servants, Price's wife and his daughter. If they should wake up and see us we must intimidate them to keep them from screaming. Now, come on."

The speaker mounted to the roof of the kitchen and the other two followed.

Joe had left his window slightly open both top and bottom, to admit air.

The crook noticed the fact with satisfaction.

He pushed the window up and looked in.

As the room was dark he did not notice that the bed was occupied.

He scrambled up and entered the room.

Telling his pals to wait where they were, he walked toward the door and in doing so saw that the bed had an occupant.

A coat hanging across a chair and a pair of trousers told him that there was a man in the room.

This was a surprise to him, and he stopped to consider the changed conditions.

He judged that this must be a visitor.

He ventured to strike a match and looked at the sleeper.

He saw he was a boy and breathed a bit easier.

Boys were heavy sleepers, as a rule, he figured.

He opened the door and went into the corridor where he tried the first door he came to.

It was locked.

So was the next one.

Then he turned the handle of the door which opened into the sitting-room and found no bar to his passage.

He struck a match and looked around.

He noted many valuable nicknacks and ornaments, and also a desk.

It was locked, but he expected that.

He inserted a jimmy under the roll-top at the point where the lock was, pressed down and the lock broke with a sharp report.

He retreated to the door and waited.

Nothing happened.

He did not go back, but returned to the room where Joe still slept serenely on.

Leaning out of the window he told his pals to get in, but to make no noise for a boy was sleeping in the room.

"I thought you said there was nobody in the house but women?" said Sharkey.

"This chap doesn't belong here. He's a visitor. He is here by accident," said the crook.

"Suppose he wakes up?"

"We'll knock him on the head and stop him from making any trouble."

The fishermen hesitated.

"Hurry up!" said the crook, impatiently. "We want to get through this job."

Sharkey scrambled in at the window and Peters came after him.

The three passed into the hallway, like shadows, shutting the door after them.

The crook took the key from the inside and locked it, as a precaution.

Nearly an hour passed and not a sound was heard in the house.

Then the door was opened and the three men entered, each carrying a bag in his hand.

They glided to the window and Peters crawled out, when his bag was handed to him.

At that moment Joe woke up suddenly.

What aroused him he never knew, for the men made no noise.

He sat up and saw the other two get out with their bundles and disappear.

The crook was the last of the bunch, and he did not take the trouble to close the window.

As they vanished, the spell that held the boy broke and he sprang out of bed and ran to the window.

The men were on the kitchen roof, Peters in the act of getting on the ladder.

At that moment the moon came out from behind a cloud and shone full against the house and upon the men.

With an ejaculation of surprise, Joe recognized Sharkey and Peters, but the crook was a complete stranger to him.

He saw that they had been in the house and their bags proved they had made a successful job of it.

Joe was a boy of decision.

He got into his clothes in a very few moments.

When he looked out of the window again the men were going over the back fence.

The short ladder remained against the side of the kitchen.

Joe waited till they were out of sight, then let himself out of the window, slid down the ladder and went to the fence.

The men were nearly across an unbuilt strip of ground skirting on the next street.

Joe watched them and saw them turn down the street.

He scrambled over the fence and followed them.

He had to be cautious for the night was still and his shoes made some noise.

He noticed that the men made no noise, and concluded that they were wearing rubbers.

They turned up the street leading to the outskirts.

The many trees along the route enabled Joe to keep in the shadow.

He walked on the outside while they traveled along on the walk.

A policeman patrolled this section, but he had a long beat and Joe saw no sign of him.

Gradually the town dwindled to a few scattering houses and soon the three men were traversing the road that led parallel with the shore a mile or more away.

They looked back occasionally, but did not see Joe or anybody else.

They hurried as fast as they could with their bags.

On either side of the road were fields that had been ploughed for cultivation.

A mile from town they branched off into one of these fields, and Joe wondered how he could avoid discovery in tagging after them.

The moon shone out once in a while, and the field was quite open.

He saw the men were aiming for the wood and he judged they were going in the neighborhood of the fishing hamlet.

He continued on to the nearest fence that divided the field from its neighbor and, keeping that between him and the men, he kept on.

By this time they had disappeared into the wood.

In due course Joe reached and entered the wood at another point.

On his way through he came to a deserted hut.

He was passing it when he saw a dim light through the window.

Suspecting the men had stopped there he approached the shanty and cautiously peered through the window.

The three men were inside and had dumped their bags of plunder out on the floor and were sorting and dividing it.

Among other things was a case containing a set of valuable diamond jewels.

A discussion arose over this.

The fishermen wanted it divided, but the crook, who understood its value, was determined on retaining it himself.

"I'm the only one who can safely turn these diamonds into cash," he said. "I'll take them to New York and sell them for the best price I can get. Then I'll send you your shares by mail in a money-order."

"That's all very well," said Sharkey, "but suppose you forget to send us our share?"

"Me forget? One pal never goes back on another," said the crook.

"My old woman says, out of sight out of mind," said Peters.

"There ain't no such thing with me."

"You let us have the diamonds and you take the rest of the stuff," said Sharkey.

"Haven't I told you that you couldn't sell them without being detected? The detectives will be on the watch in Boston before you could get there. I wouldn't think of selling them there. I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll let you have my share of the money as security."

"That would only be \$50 apiece for us."

"Well, as I'm the head of this job, and put you on to a good thing, I ought to have the chief say," said the crook.

"You'll have \$150 each, which is more money than either of you have had in a coon's age. Then you'll have a lot of valuable small stuff to be sold by and by. You mustn't try to realize on them for at least six months from now."

"We may be suspected and our houses searched," said Peters.

"What of it? Hide all but the money here in this shanty under the floor. Money can't be identified, so you'll be safe to take that home."

"You're goin' to connect with a New York train in the mornin'?" said Sharkey.

"First thing. I'm going over to the cave now to roost till daylight. Just hide your stuff under the floor and let it stay there, then I'll be off."

"You'll surely send us our share of the diamonds?" said Peters.

"As certain as winking," replied the crook.

So the matter was adjusted. Peters and Sharkey hid their plunder, excepting the money, under the floor of the shanty, and Joe, falling back among the trees, saw the men go on to the rocks, the crook carrying his bag.

CHAPTER XII.

CONCLUSION.

Joe did not follow them further.

The fishermen thieves were going to their cottages, while the crook was going to the cave, which was the scene of his and Mabel's adventure weeks since.

The young ship chandler knew what he was going to do.

He hurried back to town and appeared at the station-house.

He reported the robbery of Mr. Price's house, telling his story from the moment he saw the thieves getting out at his window till he rounded them up, so to speak, at the shanty in the wood.

"You say one of the men was a stranger to you, but the other two are Sharkey and Peters, recently released from prison?" said the desk officer.

"Yes, and you haven't any time to lose in order to catch the unidentified man, who is the chief rascal in the robbery, judging from what I heard him say. He has Mrs. Price's

diamonds with him, and they are the most valuable part of the stolen property, as well as a bag of other stuff. You will find him at the cave on the cliffs where those two boys hid so long. You can take your time arresting the fishermen, for they are not expecting to be nabbed. They have \$150 each of stolen money in their possession. The rest of their plunder they concealed in the shanty in the wood. I will show you the spot, for I saw them hide it."

The police got busy right away.

The light wagon was hitched up and half a dozen men, with Joe, drove out to a point on the road opposite the wood.

Five of the party and Joe went directly to the shanty where the two bags of valuables were found under the floor.

One of the officers took the bags back to the wagon while the rest proceeded with Joe to the cave, a mile and a little over further on.

Here the crook was found asleep and was arrested, much to his surprise.

His bag of plunder was found near him, but he was not searched for the diamonds; that was deferred till he reached the station-house.

He was handcuffed and sent to the wagon in charge of two men with Joe.

The other two officers waited at the wood till their comrades returned and then marched to the cottages on the shelf where Sharkey and Peters were, in turn, aroused and handcuffed.

"I haven't don't nothin'," protested Sharkey.

Peters also protested vehemently against what he called an outrage, but their hearts fell when they reached the wagon and saw their friend, the crook, in custody, and the bags of plunder in the vehicle.

At the station-house the men were searched.

The box of diamonds was found on the crook, and the money in the pockets of the fishermen.

They were locked up and Joe started to return to the Price house.

It was close on to daylight when he got in at the window of the room and, removing his clothes, went to bed to get two or three hours' sleep.

There was great excitement in the house next morning when Mrs. Price discovered that the house had been robbed during the night.

Joe slept through this early excitement, and was finally aroused by a servant knocking on his door at eight o'clock.

In fifteen minutes he entered the sitting-room and found Mabel and her mother all broke up.

"We've been robbed during the night," said Mabel, through her tears.

"Yes, I know," said Joe, serenely.

"Did the servant tell you?" said the girl, wondering at the boy's lack of surprise.

"No. I knew it almost as soon as it occurred, which was around two o'clock."

"Why, what do you mean, Mr. Stanton?" asked Mabel.

"Three men committed the burglary," he said.

"How do you know that?"

"I saw them leaving the house through my window. They entered that way and went through the house while I was asleep."

"You saw the thieves and didn't alarm us?"

"What good would that have done? It would only have upset you both to no purpose."

"What did you do?"

"Put on my clothes and followed them to see where they were bound."

"You did?" cried Mabel, in astonishment.

"Yes. I followed them for a couple of miles to the little wood near the cliffs."

"Is that where they went?"

"Yes. They divided their plunder there, two of the men hiding theirs under the floor; the other carried his away with him to the cave where we were held up that Sunday. This chap had, I should judge, the most valuable part, a box of diamond ornaments."

"My diamonds!" cried Mrs. Price.

Joe then told them all that happened after that, which included the arrest of the thieves and the recovery of the stolen property.

Joe told them the identity of the fishermen burglars.

It was nine o'clock when they sat down to breakfast, and before they were done a policeman called to get Mrs. Price to go to the station-house to identify the stolen property.

This she did, accompanied by Joe and her daughter, and she recognized the property as belonging to her, her daughter, and the house.

The three men were brought before the magistrate later on, and on Joe's testimony, backed up by the stolen goods which had been taken from them, they were held for trial.

A month later they were tried, convicted and got ten years each, so back to prison they went, and their wives were frantic over the sentence they got.

As if that wasn't enough, Glim and Pixey were arrested in Boston for petty thievery, and were sent to the House of Correction until they came of age.

Word was sent to the judge about the crime they were suspected to have committed in Oldport, and it was added to the record that was forwarded with them to the reformatory.

In the meantime, when Mr. Price returned home he was greatly taken back by the story of the robbery at his house.

He sent for Joe and heard the full story from his lips, though it had already been printed in the Morning News.

"I must give you full credit for outwitting the burglars and saving our property," he told the young ship chandler. "You must let me present you with a fitting reward."

"No, sir, you are welcome to what I have done for you. I am getting on so well that I don't require any pecuniary evidence of your appreciation. You helped me make my start, and that is all the favor I need from you now."

Nevertheless, Joe received a very handsome present from the Prices jointly, and he did not turn it down.

That summer was easier for Joe than the previous one, for his business was practically running itself.

For a whole year the fantastic Malay head had stood in Joe's window untouched save when the curiosities were occasionally taken out to clean the window.

It had attracted a great deal of attention, and Joe regarded it as the most taking, ugly as it was, of his window display.

He decided that he would not sell it, and removed the ticket from it.

One day a bunch of summer girls came into his shop and asked him if they could examine the head at closer range.

To oblige them, he took it from the window and let them look at it.

They declared it was the ugliest and most sinister face they had ever seen.

When they had satisfied their curiosity they went away, and Joe left the head on his glass case while he waited on a customer.

As soon as he was disengaged he picked up the head to return it to the window.

In some way the image slipped out of his hand and fell on the floor.

It broke into a dozen fragments and a stream of real golden pearls issued from its hollow inside.

Joe was amazed and stared at the ruin of the head.

Then he gathered up the pearls and examined them.

They were all perfect round gems.

There were fifty of them, and each was worth \$1,000, as he subsequently found out.

He disposed of most of them in Boston, but he kept ten, which he placed in a safe-deposit box at the Oldport National Bank for safe keeping.

Joe bought the ground and the new three-story brick building which Mrs. Starbuck had erected on the site of the burned store.

He moved his business back there, and so Starbuck's Ship Chandlery returned to its original number, where it had been established over fifty years since.

In the back half of the second floor he established his printing outfit, which he so enlarged and improved that it could no longer be called an amateur plant.

He put Dick in charge of it and took him in as partner in that branch, thus adding a new printing office to the town under the firm name of Stanton & Slater.

His ship chandlery business bore his own name as proprietor in small type under the trade-mark of Starbuck's Ship Chandlery."

And now having shown how Joe rose from errand boy to a successful boss of his own business, and a monopoly at that, we let the curtain fall, merely adding that soon after he came of age Joe married Mabel Price and, as a wedding present, gave her the ten golden pearls strung on a golden necklace.

Next week's issue will contain "THE BANKERS' PLOT; OR, THE MYSTERIOUS BOY FROM CRIPPLE CREEK."

SEND POSTAL FOR OUR FREE CATALOGUE.

CURRENT NEWS

In the German army mobilization manoeuvres sentinels were placed at the doors of all banks in Metz. The sight started a "run" by frightened depositors that lasted for hours.

Chicago leads in parcel post business with 3,617,673 packages shipped in January, to New York's 2,972,379. New York, however, received 660,182 packages, or 107,865 more than Chicago.

The east winds of New England proved deadly to one of a herd of five camels which appeared at a theater in Boston, February 12. While the camels were being led from the stables down Tremont street for the afternoon performance one of them kneeled, as if to allow a person to get on its back, and then stretched out lifeless. The management of the theatrical company has offered the carcass to the Museum of Natural History at Harvard.

An unusual will was filed for probate recently in Mineola, L. I., N. Y. It was made out for a negro, seventy years old, who could neither read nor write, but left personal property worth \$30,000. James Hammond, who lived in Oyster Bay, was the man. For fifty years he worked on the Weeks estate. Hammond bequeathed \$2,000 to his friend, James Scudder, \$2,000 to Sarah Mayher Scudder, and \$5,000 to Bertha Edith Hammond. Several nephews got only \$1 apiece. The three who received direct bequests are also the residuary legatees.

According to the Paris correspondent of The Navy, the two French battleships A-7 and A-8, to be laid down in 1913, will carry twelve 13.5-inch guns in three four-inch turrets. Are not the French putting too many eggs in one basket? One successful penetration by a high-explosive shell might put four guns out of action at once. Against this is to be considered the accuracy of fire and the reduction of weight both in mount and armor. Our own three-gun mount embodies, we understand, a combined sleeve for all guns, and the three guns will be given the same training and elevation under the hand of one man.

Frightened by engines and nervous from wading through deep snow on the way to the car in which she was to be shipped from Watertown, N. Y., February 12, to New York, Ella, largest of a herd of elephants belonging to the John Robinson indoor circus, escaped from her keepers recently. The elephant smashed the doors of the Consumers' Brewing Company, spilled cases of beer on the floor, caused a collision between runaway horses, scared men and shopgirls, and ended in a wild trampling of militia accoutrements in the kit room at the state armory. Ella, who is forty years old and weighs 5,700 pounds, had crashed through the four-inch doors of the armory and smashed a wooden and glass partition separating the drill shed from the kit room.

Five members of the family of Matthias Mandler, of Fountain Spring, Pa., four of whom have been operated upon and had their appendixes removed, have been patients for appendicitis within a short period. The first was Philip, the eldest son. Then came his sister, Marion, aged eight years, on January 16 last. Next came Anna, aged ten years, another sister, on January 28. Six-year-old Elizabeth, a few days later, underwent the same ordeal that her brother and sisters had successfully passed. Now the mother is a sufferer with the same trouble and the surgeons say she too will have to be operated upon. The head of the family says he is enjoying perfect health; but he is the only one of the household who will be able to retain his appendix undisturbed.

Two months hence an event of world-wide interest to Christianity will take place in Rome, "the Eternal City." The Mikado of Japan will pay a visit to the Pope—the first ever paid by an Oriental sovereign to the Vicar of the Vatican. The Mikado will be received with becoming ceremonies. He will be entertained at one of the most elaborate banquets ever given by a Pope to king or emperor. It is probable that the American Cardinal, Monsignor O'Connell, of Boston, will be called to Rome to assist in receiving the ruler of Japan. Dr. O'Connell was the Pope's legate to the Emperor's father when the status of Japanese Catholics was being discussed several years ago. He enjoys the personal friendship of the new ruler, and his presence will therefore be a deft compliment to the visiting Mikado. Important developments are expected as a result of the Mikado's visit.

The declaration of the German Imperial Chancellor that it was intended to increase to 650,000 men the peace establishment of the army, and probably to abandon the two-year term of service for the bulk of the army and return to the three-year system, is causing profound emotion in France. This radical departure is regarded as the last effort that can be made in the direction of increasing the nation's fighting strength on land. It is not felt to be a threat to France or even a menace to peace, but simply as a measure deemed by German military experts as rendered necessary by Germany's geographical situation and historical precedents. Meanwhile, it is considered certain that the French government, maintaining always its absolutely pacific intentions in so far as is consistent with national dignity, will also speedily adopt measures giving greater strength to its army in a corresponding degree. It is by no means improbable that besides increased armaments a return in the special arms of the service will be made to the system of three years' compulsory service with the colors. It is believed in military circles in Paris that the real motive for the step of vital importance about to be made by Germany is the enormous and rapid increase made recently by the Russian army, which is to-day formidable enough to hold in check simultaneous attacks from both Germany and Austria-Hungary.

THE BOY DIVERS

OR,

THE MYSTERY OF THE SUNKEN SHIP

By GASTON GARNE

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER VIII (continued)

Who could the dead man be, and what was the contents of the box?

The boy diver advanced and laid hold upon the box. The dead fingers clutching it were forced to relinquish their hold.

Dick secured the box.

The lid was fastened. There was a ring-handle at each end, and Dick passed a strap attached to his belt through the ring and so made the box fast.

Then he passed out of the cabin, and floating upon the water the corpse followed him. He slammed the door to rid himself of the horrifying pursuit. Leaving the dead man in the cabin, Dick went on.

Reaching another door he opened it, and flashing his search-light through the waves beyond the portal, he saw he had entered a compartment which was partially filled with merchandise.

Dick sought to examine the merchandise, since it was his purpose to ascertain to what extent it had been injured by the action of the water.

But the succeeding moment as he reached a side wall, the submerged vessel gave a tremendous lurch.

There was a crash. Dick was hurled violently against the side of the ship. Almost involuntarily he threw out his hands and grasped the life-line. The force of the shock had not shattered the glass of his helmet. He picked himself up and turned to the door.

The merchandise in the compartment had been carried against it. But the door was not jammed, else his air pipe would have been sundered between the sills. A box was wedged in the door keeping it partially open, and shielding the air tube and the life-line that passed through the space.

But against the partially closed door the merchandise was heaped, and the space left open above it was not wide enough to admit of his passage.

Dick was imprisoned in the sunken ship!

The realization of this calamity filled him with terror.

But he strove to maintain his presence of mind. While the air tube remained intact he had hope.

He thought old Dan might find him. But meantime he set to work seeking to remove the blockade from the door.

This was a labor which taxed all his strength, and occupied some time.

But at length Dick succeeded in removing the last obstacle, and then he pushed the door open sufficiently to

give him egress. He passed out and groped his way in the direction of the hatch.

He gained it and managed to get back on the deck.

At that moment a dark object passed over him like a flash. There was a tremendous jerk on the air-pipe, and then Dick knew that it had been severed by a shark.

The water came surging through the pipe.

Dick was deprived of air. He jerked madly upon the life-line. It yielded in his hand, and then he knew that the line, too, had been sundered by the ocean monster.

Dick was drowning. He stumbled and fell.

But meanwhile, we must follow old Dan, in his search for the unfortunate boy diver.

Old Dan was filled with grave fears, when he saw that the submerged vessel had lurched during his last absence.

He crept toward the main hatch, peering intently ahead by the light of his submarine lantern. The next moment he discovered the body of Dick.

The lad lay motionless beside the stump of the main mast.

Old Dan seized him in his arms and at once jerked his life-line, giving the signal to draw up.

At once he began to ascend through the waves, bearing the body of his young pupil in his strong arms.

Mark had heard the signal old Dan had violently given, and the lad was turning the crank of the windlass with great speed, fully alive to the possibility that a precious human life might depend upon the rapidity of his exertions.

Soon the veteran diver with his burden reached the surface. Mark uttered a cry of mingled joy and alarm as he saw the seemingly lifeless form of Dick, and he assisted old Dan to place the boy in the boat.

Mark took off Dick's helmet, and then the rest of the diver's suit was removed from the form of the motionless lad.

A cry of grief burst from Mark's lips, as upon examination he and old Dan failed to detect any evidence of life in Dick.

But old Dan exclaimed:

"He may be restored yet. I've seen men revived who were apparently as completely drowned as he is."

The veteran knew all the methods of the life-savers to resuscitate the drowned, and he immediately employed them to such good purpose that in about ten minutes he caused Dick to breathe. Old Dan had performed artificial

respiration, breathing into Dick's throat. But the lungs of the lad soon acted, and he slowly regained consciousness.

It was not until an hour later, when old Dan and Mark knew that Dick was out of danger, that they thought of examining the tin box which they saw fastened to the belt of Dick's diving suit.

The name on the box occasioned them great surprise, and old Dan forced the lid open.

The box Dick had rescued from the sunken wreck was found to contain a quantity of valuable jewelry, and a folded parchment.

The latter old Dan opened, and running his eyes over its contents, he exclaimed:

"Here is a remarkable discovery!"

CHAPTER IX.

THE MANUSCRIPT FROM THE SUNKEN VESSEL—IN THE HANDS OF THE FOE.

"What is it?" cried Mark.

And Dick, looking up from where he lay in the bottom of the boat, asked in a faint voice:

"Will you read aloud what I see written on the parchment?"

"Yes, lad," responded old Dan.

While Dick and Mark listened with wrapt attention, the veteran read as follows:

"DEAR BROTHER: My hours on earth are numbered, and I have entrusted the task of writing this—my last message to you—to my faithful lieutenant, Valesquez. He agrees to convey this to you in the tin money box which you left with me on the occasion of your last visit to the island station of the Black Schooner league. I leave all the gold I have gained in our secret traffic to you, and herewith I append a diagram of the island, our stronghold, and the course you must follow to find your inheritance. Valesquez will secure passage to the Florida coast on a West India merchantman, as while the government cruiser is watching the sea in the neighborhood of our island, I know Captain Hawk will not dare run into the hidden harbor with the black schooner. Our prisoner is still safe in the great sea-cave prison. When next Captain Hawk lays up in the bayou in the everglades, called Indian Lagoon, warn him that the government cruiser is still in our waters. Now I must say farewell forever, for I have not the strength to dictate at greater length.

"Your brother,

"SEBASTIAN ONSLOW."

"TO CAPTAIN BRITTON ONSLOW,

"Old Coast Mansion,

"Seminole Point, Florida."

"What a strange coincidence that Jack should have brought up from the bottom of the sea this message!" cried Mark, when old Dan had finished the reading of the letter found in the tin box.

"So it is. And the letter has given us the proof that Captain Onslow is one of a league of smugglers with a secret station on a sea island."

"Yes, and that some unfortunate person is a prisoner on the island."

"That is so," assented old Dan. "But now let us consider the diagram attached to the letter."

Old Dan scanned a rude map drawn on the sheet of parchment below the letter.

He discerned a rude sketch of a long, low island, whose principal characteristic was seven tall palm trees standing in a group at the southern extremity of the island.

On the western coast was a drawing of what looked like some sort of a rude fortress situated upon an inlet of the sea.

From the fortress a dotted line ran inland to a point very near the center of the island, where there was a square, in which the following inscription appeared:

"Old temple,
7th stone of stairway,
Treasure."

"All this is plain enough, I should say," remarked old Dan, "and I reckon one could find the island by the prominent landmark of the seven tall palms. I've an idea as the smugglers must ply between the West Indies and our coast, the island station is on one of the Bahama keys."

"That diagram would be worth something to the government cruiser who is after the smugglers," said Mark.

"Yes, and who knows but it may yet be of value to us?" Dick added.

As the divers were in no mood for further exploration of the sunken vessel that day, they presently returned to the shore, and then repaired to old Dan's cabin.

There it was decided, when night came, they should pay a secret visit to the old coast mansion, and try to rescue the sailor who held the secret of where Vadna Lynn's great inheritance lay buried at the bottom of the sea.

When night came the sky was overcast, and the darkness favored the perilous undertaking upon which the boy divers and their old tutor had resolved.

At about ten o'clock they left old Dan's cabin, and made their way in profound silence through the gloom in the direction of the old coast mansion.

The mansion was surrounded by spacious grounds, shut in by a high wall. But in the rear side of the inclosure a watercourse had been made underneath the wall.

As the water in the stream chanced to be low at the time, the boy divers and their old comrade, who were familiar with the surroundings of the mansion, meant to crawl under the wall through the waterway. This they did.

All was gloom in the great yard. The three intruders having gained the grounds, stood under the wall and listened, while their glances were turned toward the mansion, in the windows of which lights were visible.

After a moment they crept forward. Without encountering any one they reached the mansion.

(To be Continued)

FACTS WORTH READING

AEROPLANES FOR CHINA.

The President of the Chinese Republic, on the suggestion of his French military adviser, Major Brissaud Desmailles, has decided on the creation of an aerial fleet, the organization of which will be intrusted to French officers.

All Chinese staff officers, according to an announcement made in Paris, February 5, will be required to pass through the aviation school, either as pilots or observers, and a series of competitions, to which all aeroplane constructors will be invited to send machines, will be held in Peking in 1914.

The Chinese government, it is said, is anxious to have a great fleet of aeroplanes, which will be used for police work in time of peace.

SAVED BY A TOY ELEPHANT.

Emil Torday, Congo explorer, who saved his life when he faced an irate savage monarch in the wilds of Africa by the use of a mechanical toy, has returned to take charge of cataloguing the ethnological collection at the University of Pennsylvania after spending some years in the unexplored regions for the British Museum.

"When I arrived within the domain of the cannibal king," said Mr. Torday to-day, "I was ordered to go back. When I refused, the king, accompanied by all his savage retinue, came to my tent for the purpose of personally attending to my execution. In my trunk was a tiny mechanical elephant controlled by clockwork. Glad to seize any chance to prolong my life, I wound it and placed it before the savage ruler.

"As the little toy, with swaying trunk, clicked its way toward the monarch and his party they fled. They returned later thoroughly awed, and treated me as if I were a deity."

VASSAR GIRL DROWNED.

While five Vassar College students were coasting down Sunset Hill on a toboggan, at Poughkeepsie, N. Y., February 5, the toboggan got beyond their control and ran on to the thin ice of the new artificial lake, breaking through the ice and throwing all the girls into the water.

Miss Elizabeth G. Mylod, daughter of Corporation Counsel John J. Mylod, of this city, was drowned and the other four girls were saved only after a desperate struggle.

The cries of the girls were heard by Professor George Shattuck, who was at work in his laboratory, near by. He ran to the lake, where he found four of the girls still struggling in the water. They were Myra Hulst, of New Hamburg, N. Y.; Mildred Keniston, of Cambridge, Mass.; Laura Reimer, of Kingston, N. Y., and Anna J. Oldham, of Cleveland.

Professor Shattuck succeeded in getting three of the girls from the water, and Miss Phoebe Briggs, daughter of Dr. William E. Briggs, of Sacramento, jumped into the lake and, at the risk of her life, saved the fourth girl. Miss Mylod had disappeared. Her body was found an hour later under the ice.

GOAT RAISING IN MEXICO.

Most of the large plantations have more or less waste land suitable for goat raising. This industry is more profitable as an adjunct to crop raising than when pursued exclusively. It is the practice to herd the goats in the mountain land except after harvest, when they are allowed on the stubble twice a year. While one-half the herd is milked the other half is breeding. The young males are sold as soon as possible, at forty days old if the market is fair, and at that age they bring about 50 cents each. The females are kept as long as they prove profitable, usually five or six years, and then sold for \$1 to \$1.75 each. They begin to breed at two years, and it is considered good practice to breed them but once a year. The milk is worth about 10 cents a gallon, when made into cheese and sold locally. The loss by disease is much less among goats than among hogs. With a large property consisting in part of mountainous land the only expense in the raising of goats is for herding, one man being required with the milking goats, one with the breeders and one with the young goats. These men are paid 20 cents a day each. The large percentage of profit shown in goat raising is possible because they require little additional investment of capital. On the other hand, their increase is limited by the amount of waste land available, and as soon as they begin to encroach upon the arable land the profit begins to decrease rapidly.

SKELETONS IN BROADWAY.

Two more human skeletons, both in a fair state of preservation, came to the surface the other morning in the subway excavations at Broadway and Reade streets, New York, near the spot where a skeleton was unearthed recently. The bones were lying in the same general position in which they had been placed at the time of burial, and while they give no clew to the mystery of their interment in that place their finding aroused an investigation which accounted for it.

In 1673 Anthony Colve, the Dutch Governor, conveyed a grant of land to Cornelius Van Borsum, a baker, and this tract was used later as a burial place for negroes. In 1753 Van Borsum's heirs secured permission to trade the property for another piece of ground. From 1776 to 1783, while the headquarters of the British army were located near the old cemetery, it was used as a burial place for soldiers.

The description of the property given in the grant to Van Borsum indicates that it ran in a northerly direction along what is now the east side of Broadway about 3,000 feet and extended easterly from that line about 600 feet to "Malkhook Pond," supposed to be the "Collect" pond which occupied the present site of the Tombs and the adjoining property.

The contractors were instructed yesterday to preserve the two skeletons until some disposition of them has been decided upon.

NED, BESS AND MYSELF

OR,

THE SEARCH FOR THE KING'S LOST GOLD MINE

By ED KING

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER XII (continued)

I had asked the king if the mines of Nomolos were on that island, and he said he did not know and seemed disinclined to talk, saying at last that Nomolos was not a man at all, but an evil spirit who drowned in the sea everybody who mistrusted him.

I persisted in trying to locate the lost mine, however, and the king said that it might be on the southern island, but he had never been able to find it, although he had heard that it was on an island to the south.

"Australia is to the south," said Ned, when I told him this, "but that is a long way off and I will never believe that all this gold was brought here from there. There isn't anything to show that Australian aborigines knew of gold being on the island and it must be on this island to the south that the gold will be found. There is only one to the south and that is where we were, and I am going to find it."

"And I will help you," I said. "I have an idea, just as you have, that we will leave here some day, and I mean to carry away something worth while when I go."

We started on our search one cloudy morning, the rainy season being close at hand, and, avoiding the marshes as well as the tangled woods and ledge rock, set off in a direction different to any we had ever taken.

At the end of a tramp of five miles, during which we had seen no evidences of gold, for I was posted on such things, we came to a narrow pass leading between two huge masses of black rock, and my special man, who was at my side, said:

"Man live in dere; you no go too quick; him throw stone, spear, everything."

"You mean we must hurry or we may be surprised in the pass?"

"Dat him. Hully up quick, you take him sudden."

"All right, then," and I passed the word rapidly down the line that the pass must be carried quickly.

Forty of our bowmen took the lead, then a hundred spearmen followed and Ned, Bess and myself led the rest of our forces.

Soon we heard the noise of a fight ahead of us, but we pressed on and made the pass, coming suddenly upon a village of rude mud and stone huts, built in a little valley not more than a hundred feet wide, but winding this way and that for a mile or more.

Men and women came swarming out of the huts and attacked us furiously, but the arrows were something they could not stand, and they quickly retreated, throwing stones at us from a distance.

I directed my men to advance and the others quickly retreated, and then the old man with his long beard, who had eluded us so strangely on our first visit, came out of a hut as wretched as the rest, waved his staff above his head and said:

"Why do the white devils from the burning mountain come to annoy us? Let them beware the wrath of Nomolos, who will bury them deep in the sea and put out forever the fires that they would hurl at us."

I answered as well as I could, using a combination dialect of all the islands, and said:

"We do not wish to annoy you, old man, and if you and your people wish food it is at your service. We seek the lost gold of King Nomolos and will reward you if you will tell us where it is."

"Under the sea where you will be if you seek to know the secrets of the king," said the old man in a harsh voice. "We ask nothing from you, so depart, lest you perish."

"The old man knows where the lost mines are and he must tell us," I whispered to Ned. "Quick, let us seize him."

We sprang forward, but the old man had evidently divined our intention, for he suddenly dashed away and dived into the mud hut from which he had lately emerged.

A score of my men sprang after him at my bidding, and in a few minutes the hut was utterly demolished and its material scattered in all directions.

I had expected to find the old man crouching in a corner or lying among the debris, but there was not a sign of him either within or outside the hut, and yet I had seen him enter, as had many others.

The debris was scattered and only the bare, rough ground was visible, and yet nothing was to be seen of the strange creature.

"Pass on through the valley; we have no need for this white-bearded old humbug," said Ned to me, for he, as well as I, had seen the ominous looks on the faces of many of our men and knew that great peril to us impended unless we acted promptly and decisively.

"The white kings are but children; they are less than ourselves; let us throw off their rule and be free!" cried one of our generals, a man whom I had always distrusted.

A wild shout arose, but upon the instant Ned wheeled about and shot the traitor dead.

CHAPTER XIII.

MANY MYSTERIES EXPLAINED.

"That is the answer that all will receive who question my right to rule these islands," said Ned, fiercely, as he

pointed to the dead general. "Take him away and let all hesitate who seek to follow his example."

Bess and I were at Ned's side, and if a hostile movement had been made against us we would have at least sold our lives dearly and the traitors, if there were others among our men, knew this and feared to be the first to fall beneath our terrible weapons.

I knew that Ned was as much averse to taking life as I was, but we had been in deadly peril and the slightest hesitation on our part would have resulted in our death, and he had taken the only step possible under the circumstances.

"Go on through the valley," he continued. "What if this old man has escaped? That is nothing. Forward march!"

The death of the traitor general had had a salutary effect on the others, and no further opposition was made to us.

We proceeded through the valley and then continued on our way, but although we marched nearly all that day and made careful search among the rocks and in the few narrow streams, we encountered no traces of gold, we found none. "I don't believe the lost mines are on this island at all," I declared at last. "There is gold on my island, for we have found it, and I believe that if we start a placer mine in the streams there we will get considerable."

"Maybe so," replied Ned, "but I believe the lost mines are on this southern island, and I intend to find them."

"Talking about finding missing things, how do you account for the two disappearances of that strange old man?"

"I can account for the second. It is likely enough that there was a hole in the ground under his hut and when your men demolished it the debris covered the hole. If we had cleared away all the rubbish it is probable that we would have found him."

"I thought all the rubbish had been cleared."

"The wreck of the mud house was cleared away, but there was other stuff on the ground, and the hole was covered. It must have been, for I don't believe in his making himself invisible or anything like that."

"No, of course not, but how do you explain his disappearance at the black rock in the woods?"

"I can't explain that at present."

It was getting toward evening and we had concluded to encamp for the night, when, as we halted on the edge of a bowl-like depression, some five hundred feet in width, we saw every now and then puffs of vapor or smoke issue from the ground.

I descended into the strange basin, and presently a cloud of steam issued from the ground almost at my feet, and I noticed a round opening a few inches in width, and as I walked on, looking for others lest I should step into one of them.

I found several of these openings, some larger and many much smaller, being merely a crack less than an inch wide, but two or three yards long, so that when the steam puffed out it formed a kind of curtain, which completely hid me for the moment.

Once I struck the ground sharply with my rifle and in an instant a tiny crack opened and a curtain-like cloud of

steam appeared and shut off my view of my companions for several seconds, when it finally dissolved and I could see everything as distinctly as before.

I hurried back to my companions, asked them if they had noticed the steam, and said:

"I believe I have found the solution of the mystery of the old man's strange disappearance at the black rock. You remember the underground streams that we saw? Well, this island is doubtless volcanic, but steam instead of lava issues from the openings. There are many such instances."

"Well?" said Ned.

"At intervals this steam is forced up naturally, but any disturbance of the surface, such as heavy walking or pounding or throwing down a staff causes the steam to issue and in some cases to open new cracks. Just now I struck the ground with my rifle to see if it were hollow, and I opened a new crevice."

"Yes, and for a few moments you were entirely hidden from us and Bess began to be greatly alarmed."

"I believe that is how the old man got away from us. The steam hid him just long enough to let him crouch down and slip away, and as we were looking for him only in one place we did not see him escape; and, besides, the place was somewhat obscure and there were scrubby trees here and there behind which he could conceal himself for a time."

"Yes, and he is thoroughly familiar with the place and then his skin is dark and not unlike the color of the ground. Some of the Malays are so lithe, it is said, that they can glide along the ground like a snake and at a tremendous rate of speed, and this old man no doubt can do the same thing. Have you noticed how active he can be at times?"

"Yes, indeed, and if he is as old as his beard would seem to indicate, he is a remarkably well preserved old fellow. Well, we'll be prepared for his mysterious disappearances the next time we meet him, if we do come across him again."

Our men were somewhat averse to our encamping on the edge of the basin, and my man, whom I called Sam for convenience, said to me:

"Me no like stay here. Spirits live in basin, go puff-puff all night, bime-bye come out."

Nonsense, Sam. There are no such things as spirits."

"Oh, yes; plenty heap spirits in island; make big mountain smoke, make puff-puff, make ground shake, make um down, down under water."

"Well, I'm not afraid of them, anyhow, Sam, and we are going to stay here because it is night now and we have gone far enough."

"All the same spirits," persisted Sam. "Make rain, shake island, sink um. Nomolos him bad king, spirit take him island under water, keep him there, never come up, kill all peoples, stay down forty thousand years."

"What are you saying, Sam? You say an island sank under water?"

"Yes. Nomolos sink um, put him under water. Him bad spirit, all the man afraid ob he, him make puff-puff, bime-bye him sink this island, too, same as noder one."

(To be Continued)

FROM ALL POINTS

W. A. Smith is recovering in the Michigan University Hospital, after an operation in which part of his brain was removed and replaced with that of a dog.

Mrs. R. Catharine Kenney, of Roxbury, Mass., didn't like a steak served in a restaurant. In the dispute gravy was spilled on her gown and now she has won a \$5,000 verdict in a suit for damages.

A South Carolina legislator has introduced a bill forbidding any one in the state having more than 1,000 acres of land or more than \$10,000,000 in any form of wealth. The rest of South Carolina isn't worrying.

A Westinghouse Electric Company employee here ordered a satchel sent from Pittsburgh by parcel post. It reached him with "due stamps" for \$6.40 on it. It was locked and the postoffice men classed it as a "letter."

Representative Slayden of Texas has a bill in Congress to tax dynamite manufacturers and dealers for a fund to keep an accurate record of every pound of explosive from factory to detonation as a check on "bomb outrages."

A remarkable flight of 120 miles over water was made from Buenos Aires to Montevideo recently by Corporal Fels. The distance covered was 120 miles and the time of the flight something over two hours. The flight was made down the river, which is 80 miles wide at its mouth. The young corporal is a student of engineering who is doing one year of military service. He pilots a Bleriot monoplane.

In an article just published in Paris, entitled "The Paris Vice Workshop," Philarete Chasles, a well-known critic, says that no fewer than 85,000 men and women are leading criminal lives in Paris. This army he divides as follows: 42,000 swindlers and thieves, 12,000 smugglers, and 30,600 connected with the social evil. Aside from these delinquents there are 25,000 child and adult vagabonds in Paris. The existence of this large and vicious section of the city's population Mr. Chasles attributes to the modern idolatry of money and to the loss of ideals of glory, honor and religion.

The first iceboat accident on the North Shrewsbury River occurred at Red Bank, N. J., February 8, when Lester C. Conover's yacht Knip struck an air hole in the ice and was wrecked. Conover, who was alone in the boat at the time, was racing with Harry Smock's boat Juanita II. Conover, who was in the lead, turned to note his opponent's distance when the craft struck the air hole, overturning. He was tossed several feet out on the ice but escaped injury. The main boom on the boat was broken off short at the cockpit. The mast also was broken. The Knip is classed in the mosquito fleet.

Aside from being a millionaire book publisher, Ellsberry Reynolds, of Chicago, who is building a residence on his property, Relay Heights, north of Pomona, Cal., is likely to reap another fortune by the discovery of gold in the hills back of his home, if present indications hold out. It seems that Mr. Reynolds and Harold Bell Wright, who has been the former's guest at Relay Heights, have been doing some "panning" in the gravel deposits of the hillside with a suspicion that something worth while might result, and when workmen were excavating for a new swimming pool back of Mr. Reynold's new residence, the book publisher found some rich "prospects" and took some of the earth to an assay office in Los Angeles. The samples, according to the assayer's written report, "show" gold and as there is a large quantity of similar gravel composition in the hills that Mr. Reynolds owns in the Relay Heights property, he is feeling particularly jubilant.

While two United States Government officers and seven clerks shouted and kicked on the door of the custom office in the Federal Building, Pittsburgh, Pa., February 8, George W. Hall, formerly deputy collector of this port, walked out of the building and is now a fugitive. Hall, by a ruse, got all the employees into the private office, from which the only exit to the hall is through the front office. Hall stepped into the front office and locked the others in the private office behind him. Held on charges of making false entries, embezzlement, and conspiracy, Hall has been in jail since January 18. Special Agent Walter S. Chance of the Customs Service arrived this morning from Washington. Hall was brought from jail by Deputy United States Marshal George W. Owens and taken to the Federal Building. Hall promised to go through the books and explain the entries. Instead, he tricked his custodian. He had half an hour's start of pursuers before the alarm was given and his prisoners released.

"Capable of attaining speeds of 100 to 150 miles an hour" is the claim made by the inventor of the Kearney high-speed railway. To demonstrate its possibilities, and also as a substitute for the present system of tube railways and tramways, a model exhibition was given at Olympia. For this purpose a miniature tube gradient railway, with stations just beneath the road surface, had been erected in the gallery of the hall. The cars run on a single rail, but, unlike the gyroscope mono-rail, there is a corresponding rail overhead. It is claimed for the system that it forms an ideal combination of shallow and deep level construction. The stations on the tube railways built on this system will be shallow—there will be no lifts—while the main portion of the track will be at a depth of 100 feet below the street level. By using steep gradients (one in seven) for accelerating and retarding trains, which, of course, are all electrically driven, it is possible to obtain a speed of thirty miles an hour, including stops, which is much higher than that of the existing tube railways in London.

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ITEMS OF CURRENT NEWS

A silver dollar has been received at the office of the Plainfield Friday Caller by parcel post from Wakita, Okla. On one side was a parcel post 1 cent stamp, and on the other side was a piece of paper, cut the size of the dollar and securely pasted. It bore the return mark: "From Lock Box 91, Wakita, Okla." The dollar made the trip in safety. It came from Charles Straughan, a real estate man, who sent it to test the efficiency of the mail service. It was not registered.

The Hamburg-American liner Imperator, biggest steamship afloat, will make her first trip from Hamburg on May 28 instead of May 7, as originally scheduled. The change in the plan of the line has been made to give ample time for an extended trial trip. Under the new schedule the Imperator should arrive in New York on June 4. She is listed to sail for Hamburg on June 7 at 11 a. m.

"A Gainsborough portrait was used as a target by youthful archers," said Montague Shearman, a noted lawyer, of London, in accounting for some marks of restoration on a picture, the possession of which is the subject of a lawsuit. The portrait recently was sold at Christie's for \$42,000. Shearman said the picture had hung on the walls of the rectory of a church, and the two sons of the rector, Johnnie and Jimmie, armed with bows and arrows, had used it as a target for a shooting match. The face was the bull's eye. One archer made an inner, piercing the lady's neck. The other scored an outer.

The lines in the North Atlantic pool have not met the Canadian Pacific's cut in steerage rates by reducing theirs to identically the same amounts from Hamburg, Bremen, Rotterdam and Trieste to Canada. This announcement is a surprise, being apparently contrary to recent statements by the German lines in the pool. The Boersen Courier contends that if effective pressure is brought by the pool on the Canadian Pacific that it will result in the diversion of traffic from St. John and Halifax to Portland, Me. Other newspaper comments betray uneasiness lest the pool encounter further difficulties in consequence of the shipping trust inquiry in the United States.

A special order of five hundred rifles of a new model has been given by the United States Government to the Colt Fire Arms Company. They are automatic and will discharge 652 shots a minute. The new gun, although a little heavier than an ordinary rifle, will be used as a field gun, the operator lying on the ground and supporting the front of the gun on a tripod. Thirty bullets can be fired in the fraction of a second, another magazine can be adjusted in a fraction of a second and these successively discharged until the record of 652 is obtained. Novices have fired five hundred bullets a minute. This rifle will enable a few soldiers to do the work of an ordinary company with the old gun. The company believes that the Government will give a larger order for the guns, the present being simply experimental.

JOKES AND JESTS.

Grimy—I have so much on my hands at present I don't know what to do. Primy—Why not try some soap and water?

"There's no coal left in the cellar, ma'am." "Why didn't you tell me before, Mary?" "Because there was some left, ma'am."

Impecunious Lover—Be mine, Amanda, and you will be treated like an angel. Wealthy Maiden—Yes, I suppose so. Nothing to eat and less to wear. No, thank you.

"Madam, you've already overdrawn your account." "What's that?" "You haven't any more money in the bank." "The idea! A fine bank, I think, to be out of money because of the little I've drawn. Well, I'll go somewhere else."

Cissy—Mummie, I saw the place to-day where they make horses. Mother—What do you mean, dearie? I think you were mistaken. Cissy—Well, the man was just finishing one. He was nailing on his last foot.

The girls of the fifth form were asked to write a 250-word essay on a motor-car. The bright hope of the form duly weighed in with this: "My uncle bought a motor-car. He was riding to the country, and it broke down in going up a hill. My uncle tried to make it go, but couldn't although he spoilt a new suit by trying. I reckon that is about forty words. The other 210 words are what uncle said as he was walking back to town; but they are not fit to write down."

Lady—What cute little dogs! What do you charge for them? Peddler—These dogs, mum, is the—er—the Alaska spaniel, mum. All the ladies of Alaska has had these dogs for pets for centuries, mum. Such dogs as these is worth fifty dollars apiece, mum. Lady—H'm! I've read a good deal about Alaska, and have formed the opinion that ladies are rather scarce in that region. Peddler (hastily)—Yes, mum; that's what's the matter. Ladies has got so scarce that there is more dogs than they want. That's why I can sell you one of these for two dollars and a half, mum.

AN ADVENTURE WITH A GHOST.

By Horace Appleton.

When I was a lad of seventeen I was an office boy for Pinkerton's Philadelphia agency, and was wild, of course, to be sent out on a case.

Every time the captain got a new job I would slide up to him and say:

"Cap'n, you'd better let me go out on that."

He would answer with a quizzical grin:

"Not this time, Harry. Wait till the next case."

Along in December of that year there was a great rush of business at our office.

We had fifteen detectives, all old experienced hands, and they were upon the jump night and day.

We could not handle the business that was coming in, and the captain was wishing that we had some more men. I remember as well as can be, sitting in my chair by the door and the captain calling out in fun from his private office:

"I guess we'll let you take the next case, Harry."

Hardly had he said the words when the door opened and a raw old countryman entered.

He proved to be Joe Baylis, a Montgomery county justice of the peace, and he wanted the captain to send a man down with him to attend to a ghost who was cutting didos at Fort Washington. The captain told him he would send a man as soon as he had one at his disposal.

The old fellow left, and I jumped to my feet.

"Captain," I said, "send me on the case."

The captain leaned back in his chair, and looked at me hard.

"See here, Harry," he said, "suppose I were to send you, what would you do?"

I outlined a very elaborate campaign against the ghost. He let me finish, and then said:

"You'd make a confounded ass of yourself now, wouldn't you? You'd make us the laughing-stock of the town. Now, listen. In the first place, always bear in mind there's no such thing as a ghost. If I send you to Fort Washington, go there with that idea in your head—there is no such thing as a ghost. If you see the ghost and get near enough, jump for it. Don't be afraid. It won't hurt you; just jump for it. It will turn out to be a human being—no doubt of that. Now, I'll let you go and try your hand. If you see the ghost and think you can't handle it, lie low and follow it and see who it is."

The captain gave me money, and away I went. I felt pretty brave, for it was broad daylight then, but there were times when I wished myself out of the thing.

I got to Fort Washington about three o'clock, and inquired the way to the haunted house from the station-agent.

I found it on a hill half a mile from the town, and looked it over with interest and apprehension.

It was an old, white, frame mansion standing in park-like grounds with plenty of out-houses about it. Some countryman whom I met told me that the ghost was in the habit of standing on top of the broad stone wall that skirted the roadway.

There was an outhouse so situated that anyone concealed in it could overlook the whole stretch of wall from end to end, and I made up my mind that this was the place for me to get into before the ghost made its appearance. Then I went back to the hotel, took my supper and chatted with the waiters and a few loungers about the ghost.

I learned that it first appeared about three weeks before my arrival.

A man named McTanish, an ignorant farmhand, was the first person to encounter it.

He was coming to the town one night from the grist-mill with a sack of meal on his back, and paused for a moment in front of the old house to set the bag down on a stump and rest his shoulder. He heard a noise behind him, and, turning round, saw standing on the wall a figure he afterward said was thirteen feet high at least. He did not stop to observe the figure very carefully, though, but ran as hard as he knew how down the road.

Next day a party of men saw the ghost, and they also ran.

They said the ghost made after them breathing fire and brimstone, and acting in a peculiarly weird and unholy manner.

After that the house was avoided at night, but several strong parties of men, including the selectmen of the town, saw the ghost from a respectful distance.

It approached them in each case, and in each case they took to their heels.

About dusk I stole down to the deserted house, and it was dark when I got there.

I slid along the wall to the outhouse, crept cautiously in and shut the door again.

Hardly had I shut the door when I knew that there was some other person in that outhouse.

I felt sure there was somebody close to my elbow.

I was trembling like a leaf, but I managed to pull a match from my pocket and strike it. I held it up. It showed me a big white muffled figure not two feet away. Then the match went out.

Was I scared?

Well, now, I should say so!

There are some people who laugh at the idea of a man's hair standing on end.

They say it is a physical impossibility, but I know better. I could feel my hair rise right up and lift my hat, and my flesh crept.

But I had no time to think.

I jumped.

I had to jump.

I shut my eyes and grabbed for the ghost.

I was so frightened I seemed to lose consciousness for a moment, but grabbed something and held on.

When the first shock passed I felt the ghost tugging and pulling to get away from me.

It seemed as badly frightened as I was, and its hands were soft and warm.

"Don't hurt me," it said, in a terrified voice.

I had no voice to reply with.

I was choking, but I pulled my captive out on the lawn, and looked at it in the moonlight.

The sheet that had been muffled about the figure fell to the ground—a pretty girl of fifteen was disclosed.

I was in a cold perspiration and shaking as if recovering from a shock of electricity, but when I saw that I had caught a real genuine flesh-and-blood girl, and no ghost, I began to feel better, and presently was able to talk.

"Who are you?" I asked.

"Jennie Baylis."

"What! The daughter of Joe Baylis?"

"Yes, sir."

"What are you doing this for?"

The girl began to cry.

She said she had not meant any harm.

She and her sister had played ghost just to have some fun.

Her sister was usually with her, but did not come this night, as she was too busy.

She had heard from her father that a detective was coming to catch the ghost, but thought he was not due for a day or two, and resolved to make one last appearance, and then give up the performance till things calmed down.

"Who are you?" she asked.

"I'm the detective," I said.

"What are you going to do with me?"

I said she was my prisoner, and as such I must deliver her up to the authorities, and after a good deal of waiting she suggested that I had better give her up to her own father, the justice.

I agreed to do that, and, picking up the sheet, I held her arm and took her with me to her father's house, about a mile distant.

When we got to the farmhouse where Jennie lived it was half-past nine o'clock.

Everybody was in bed, and the lights were all out, but I boldly knocked at the door.

A window opened, and a man's voice said:

"Who's there?"

"The detective."

"You're rather late. Why did you not wait till tomorrow? Better come around and see me in the morning."

"I want to see you now. I have the ghost."

At this the window was closed with a bang, and I heard hurried steps on the stair.

The door opened, and old Baylis stood in the doorway.

He was draped in a very long, old-fashioned white gown, and wore a tall, steeple-shaped night-cap.

One hand held up a tin candle-stick, and the other shaded the light.

He looked at me in astonishment, and when he saw his daughter and the sheet I thought he was going into convulsions.

"You, Jennie?" he asked at length.

"Yes, father," said Jennie, very humbly.

Old Baylis sighed and said "Come in."

He sent for the neighbors immediately.

I don't know what was said at their meeting, for I was not admitted to it, but old Baylis gave me a letter to the captain and packed me off on the midnight train.

Next morning I reached the office early, and found all the men present, waiting for the captain to detail them.

The men grinned at me, and passed the time of day pleasantly enough.

They all knew where I had been, and anticipated a wonderful tale of disaster and defeats, which they were ready to laugh at, although I was a favorite with them, having done many a piece of extra work for every man there.

"I thought I sent you to Fort Washington, Harry?" said the captain.

"Yes, sir."

"Made an ass of yourself, I suppose?"

"There's a letter, sir."

While the captain read the letter the men geyed me plentifully.

"This is a very nice letter, Harry," said the captain.

"Boys, the youngster captured the ghost."

"Did he?" said the men.

"Yes, sir, he did. The boy is a credit to us," and then the captain read the letter of the selectmen out loud.

At every sentence I grew a foot.

"Well, how did you do it?" several inquired.

I told the story, and you may be sure I did not refrain from giving myself plenty of credit.

My tale was very highly colored.

When it was concluded, Long Jim Langdon drawled out:

"Harry, tell the honest truth. Was you frightened when that match went out?"

"No, of course not!" said I.

But I was frightened two years later, when I asked the ghost to marry me, and thought she was going to say no. However, she didn't.

NEW YORK AMERICANS' BERMUDA TRIP.

The New York Americans have completed arrangements for their training trip to Bermuda and the baseball party will sail for the island on March 1 on the steamship Arcadian. It is expected that there will be about forty-five in the party, including players, club officials, trainers, newspaper men and cooks. The club has engaged the Brunswick Hotel for the month of March, where the players can live quietly and will not be disturbed by the social gayety on the island.

The hotel is only four minutes' walk from the Hamilton Cricket Grounds, where the team will play. Manager Chance and Trainer Charles Barrett will preside over a regular training table, which will be an innovation in major league baseball. The club will ship from this city all the meats, including roast beef, lamb, ham and bacon; also, butter and drinking water.

The food at the training table will be the same as that provided for college football players and oarsmen. Pastry, hot bread and seasoned dishes will be tabooed. Trainer Barrett will take along a well-stocked medicine chest, while two massage experts will go along to keep the players' limbs free from kinks.

The Jersey City team of the International League will report at Bermuda a week after the arrival of the New Yorks and will train on the same field. It is the plan of the New York manager to play daily practice games with the Skeeters. On board ship the New Yorks will occupy the best quarters and everything will be done during the trip and their stay in Bermuda to put them in the finest condition for the American League race.

GOOD READING

Charles Zantry, arrested in Philadelphia in 1880, put up \$500 cash bail. The case was never tried. Now his widow, living in Wilmington, Del., demands the money with compound interest, \$3,420.50 in all.

Edith Markham walked through Iowa City February 14 on her hike from Portland, Ore., to New York. She made a bet with a man in Portland of \$1,000 that she could complete the walk, and is now one week ahead of her schedule. A Dane hound accompanied her.

A house near Charleroi, in the mining district of Belgium, just across the French frontier, has been partially wrecked by mysterious showers of stones, which superstitious persons are ascribing to malignant ghosts. The miners of this region are uneducated and prone to believe the wildest of supernatural tales.

Thirteen pit sinkers were killed and a number of others injured recently at the Bolsover colliery, Mansfield, England, February 8, by the snapping of a chain to which was suspended a bucket containing eight hundred gallons of water. The bucket crashed down the shaft, which was five hundred feet deep and at the bottom of which the men were working. The workers were crushed into an unrecognizable mass. Only a few who happened to be in shelter holes at the sides of the shaft escaped death. This city is the center of a large coal-mining district.

Five postmen were burned at Dundee, Scotland, February 5, several of them quite seriously, by the combustion of chemicals contained in letters. One of the postmen, on returning from his evening collection of mail from the public letter boxes, emptied his bag on the sorting table at the postoffice. The contents instantly burst into flames. A large number of the envelopes contained tubes of phosphorus and other highly inflammable chemicals. They were addressed to Premier Asquith, and the sheets of paper within were inscribed, "Justice for Women!"

The story of the sinking of the *Discovery*, a steamship that was lost nine years ago, has just become public through the statement of the man who was the only person on board to survive the wreck. The remarkable part about it is that this man had lost a hand some time before this, and that this was indirectly the means of saving his life. It seems that the ship struck an iceberg one stormy night and sank in a few minutes. Captain E. C. Weaver, the man who escaped, clung to the iceberg that the vessel had struck and remained in the awful cold until the next day, when Indians found him on the floating ice. During that time he had quenched his thirst by chopping off pieces of ice with the steel hook that he had had bound to his wrist in place of the missing hand. When the Indians found him, he was suffering severely from the exposure, and he had to be cared for by them during some ten months before he regained his strength.

Arrangements were lately made for the attendance of Indians representing practically all tribes in the United States at the ceremonies that will mark the beginning of work on the memorial to the American Indian to be erected in New York harbor by Rodman Wanamaker. The ceremonies took place on Washington's Birthday. Indians from Minnesota and other northwestern states formed the larger part of the native delegation. John Grass, a Sioux from the Standing Rock Reservation in South Dakota, was one of the orators of the occasion. Hollow Horn Bear, another South Dakota Sioux, whose portrait appears on one of the currency certificates, also spoke. The Indian delegation, accompanied by six interpreters and Major James McLaughlin, veteran Indian inspector. Among the tribes that were represented were the Chippewas, Sioux, Blackfeet, Apaches, Mandans, Gros Ventres, Rickarees and Nez Perces. "The delegations were composed entirely of full blood Indians," said Major McLaughlin. "Care was exercised in selecting delegates in order that only those of commanding presence and typical appearance might be there to represent the North American Indian, to whom the memorial is to be erected. I think New York will be interested in these Indians." Following the ceremonies in New York the Indians were brought to Washington to witness the inauguration of Governor Wilson as President.

In the Indian River region of Florida are to be seen islands green with mangrove bushes down to the water's edge. The scene is animated by the presence of many water fowls—pelicans, gallinules, water turkeys, cormorants and fish crows—feeding on the islands, together with smaller numbers of gulls, terns, vultures, ospreys and man-of-war hawks, swooping, skimming and sailing in the air above. In all this array of bird life there is no more curious and interesting creature than the water turkey, which is sometimes called the snake bird. As the stranger gazes upon this scene he is sometimes apt to think he sees a queer snake wriggling out of the water several feet into the air. If he grabs his gun and fires it is probable that a part of the supposed snake will drop upon the water, while the other part takes wing and flies away. The stranger wonders whether the snake dropped the bird or the bird the snake. The explanation is quite simple. A snake bird, or water turkey (*Piotuanhinga*), swimming with its long neck only out of the water had the snake in its bill, and the snake was dropped when the gun was fired. The water turkey has been called the most preposterous bird within the range of ornithology. "He is not a bird," says one authority; "he is a neck, with such subordinate rights, members, appurtenances and hereditaments thereunto appertaining as seem necessary to that end. He has just enough stomach to arrange nourishment for his neck, just enough wings to fly painfully along with his neck and just big enough legs to keep his neck from dragging on the ground, and his neck is light colored, while the rest of him is black."

ARTICLES OF ALL KINDS

ITALIAN AVIATION.

The Italian army is coming to the front in the use of hydroplanes, and among other performances we may mention the brilliant flights made by Lieutenant Ginnocchio upon his Paulhan machine, at Venice, alighting at times amid the numerous gondolas. Paulhan, who was on a visit there, also made flights before the Italian officers. The government is taking up the hydroplane question very actively, and is installing aeroplane posts all along the coast. It intends to use Borel hydroplanes quite extensively, and has ordered nine of these to be delivered to the Venice arsenal in three months. The first hydroplane fleet is now setting out to make over-sea flights, and the pilot Chemet is to make evolutions over the Adriatic. On the other hand, the Austrian war department has just ordered one of the newest Paulhan-Curtiss hydroplanes, known as "flying boat."

AUSTRALIA'S CAPITAL.

The Federal capital of Australia is to be situated at Canberra, in New South Wales, in the midst of some 900 square miles of territory, a part of which is as yet unknown to man. The Molonglo River will flow through the heart of the new capital. The Cotter will provide the water supply, and an impounding weir is to be erected on this stream at about a mile above its confluence with the Murrumbidgee; while the water will be carried by a pipeline to a pipe-head reservoir at Mount Stromlo, where the astronomical laboratory is to be placed, and thence to a service reservoir at Red Hill. The Molonglo will provide Canberra's ornamental waters. The Federal capital city will be the permanent seat of government of the commonwealth of Australia; the Federal Parliament will meet there, and there, too, will be the official residence of the Governor General. Thus the city is destined to be the official and social center of Australia.

Part of the Federal territory is a seaport, connection with which is to be directly provided. Almost due east of the capital on the coast of New South Wales is Jervis Bay, where the Commonwealth Government is erecting the Australian college, and Jervis Bay is also to be Canberra's sea-outlet. There is an excellent harbor and a safe anchorage in Darling Road, and between this and Canberra a railway, 96 miles long, is to be constructed.

AN OCEAN MYSTERY.

Another mystery of the deep, practically paralleling the unexplained disappearance of the crew of the brig Marie Celeste in 1873, has come to port at Newport News, Va., February 5, with the British tank steamer Roumanian.

On January 19, churning along ten days out from Port Arthur, and near the Azores, the Roumanian picked up the Norwegian bark Remittent, seaworthy, provisioned and fully rigged, but without a soul aboard and with no indication of the crew's fate. The Roumanian, after towing the

Remittent to within 100 miles of Cape Henry, lost her in a violent gale.

The Marie Celeste was found at sea with her captain's papers on the cabin table and every indication that persons were aboard within a few hours of her discovery. But nothing ever was heard of her skipper or crew.

The Roumanian sighted the Remittent in latitude 40 degrees 30 minutes, and longitude 27 degrees 30 minutes, riding a heavy swell without a hand to guide her before a freshening breeze. While the Roumanian was coming up on her the Remittent was running wild in dashes and bounds, first to one point of the compass and then to another. The Roumanian lowered boats to take a line and capture the bark. After more than an hour's jockeying the pursuing small boats finally caught her coming around broadside on and boarded her.

Her deck planks bore the marks of footsteps, but there was nothing to explain the disappearance of her master and crew. In her cabin some odds and ends rolled and clinked in the corners with the rolling of the ship; but lockfast places were undisturbed; her charts and papers were quite secure. In her water breaker there was a full supply of fresh water; salt meat and biscuits were in her stores. A mainsail and two jibs were snugly furled and her lifeboats swung properly in the davits.

FORTUNE IN OLD TRUNK.

The discovery of stocks and bonds having a face value of \$100,000 in a trunk filled with old papers was made recently by an East Side rag picker, according to William and Herman Silverman, attorneys at No. 90 Nassau street, who announced that they had instituted a search for the heirs of General Daniel C. McCallum, to whom the certificates belonged.

In the trunk also was some of the correspondence of General McCallum, who was an engineer in the Union army in the Civil War. Among the letters, Herman Silverman said, was one from Lincoln's Secretary of War, Edwin McMasters Stanton, commending General McCallum's work as director of the military railroads in transporting Sherman's army to Georgia and making possible the march to the sea.

The lawyers are unwilling to divulge the exact circumstances of the discovery or the name of the discoverer. Nor would they say what the securities were except that they were issued about fifty years ago and that the companies represented had been long since merged with others.

One of the documents was a will written by the general, but not signed by him, in which he directs that \$6,000 be used to buy United States bonds to be given to his daughter Eliza, and in the event of her death or marriage to be given to the People's Institute in Havana, Schuyler County. There were numerous telegrams from Stanton and two maps of battlefields that General McCallum made before engagements were begun.

MAGIC COINER.



A mystifying and amusing trick. Tin blanks are placed under the little tin cup and apparently coined into dimes. A real money-maker. Price, 20c. C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

THE FOUNTAIN RING.



A handsome ring connected with a rubber ball which is concealed in the palm of the hand. A gentle squeeze forces water or cologne in the face of the victim while he is examining it. The ball can be instantly filled by immersing ring in water same as a fountain pen filler. Price by mail, postpaid, 12c. each. H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

ITCH POWDER.



Gee whiz! What fun you can have with this stuff. Moisten the tip of your finger, tap it on the contents of the box, and a little bit will stick. Then shake hands with your friend, or drop a speck down his back. In a minute he will feel as if he had the seven years' itch. It will make him scratch, roar, squirm and make faces. But it is perfectly harmless, as it is made from the seeds of wild roses. The horrible itch stops in a few minutes, or can be checked immediately by rubbing the spot with a wet cloth. While it is working, you will be apt to laugh your suspender buttons off. The best joke of all. Price 10 cents a box, by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

TRICK FAN.



A lady's fan made of colored silk cloth. The fan may be used and then shut, and when it opens again, it falls in pieces; shut and open again and it is perfect, without a sign of a break. A great surprise for those not in the trick. Price, 35c. by mail, postpaid. M. V. GALLIGAN, 419 W. 56th St., N. Y.

GREAT PANEL TRICK.



This remarkable illusion consists of a simple, plain wooden panel, octagonal in shape, with no signs of a trick about it. The panel can be examined by any one; you then ask for a penny or silver coin and place it on the center of the panel; then at the word of command the coin immediately disappears. You do not change the position of the panel at any time, but hold it in full view of the audience all the time. The coin does not pass into the performer's hand, nor into his sleeve; neither does it drop upon the floor. The second illusion is as wonderful as the first. At the word of command the coin again appears upon the center of the panel as mysteriously as it went. We send full printed instructions by the aid of which any one can perform the trick, to the astonishment and delight of their friends. Price, 15c., 2 for 25c., by mail postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

"UNCLE SAM" BANKS.



For Quarters, Nickels, Dimes, and Pennies. Every deposit registers. Quarter Banks register 80 deposits or \$20.00, the Nickel Bank holds 200 deposits or \$10.00, the Dime Bank holds 200 deposits or \$20.00, and the Penny Bank contains 100 deposits or \$1.00. These banks are about 4 1/2 inches long, 4 inches high, 3 inches wide and weigh from 7-8 lb. to 11-12 lbs. They are made of heavy cold rolled steel, are beautifully ornamented, and cannot be opened until the full amount of their capacity is deposited. When the coin is put in the slot, and a lever is pressed, a bell rings. The indicator always shows the amount in the bank. All the mechanism is securely placed out of reach of meddlesome fingers. It is the strongest, safest, and most reliable bank made as it has no key, but locks and unlocks automatically. Price, \$1.00 each.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.



Solid-breech Hammerless .22 REPEATER

SOLID-BREECH HAMMERLESS SIDE-EJECTING

Sure Safe Shooting for Man or Boy—And a Simple Rifle to Care For

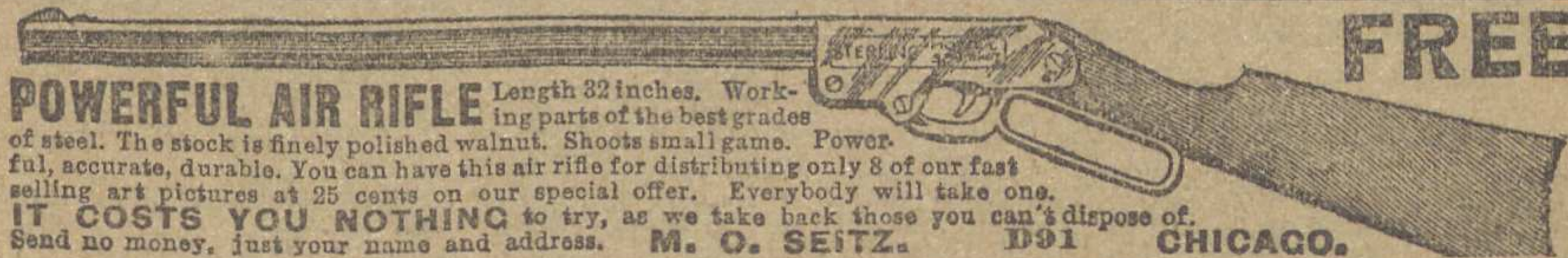
The Remington-UMC .22 Repeater is rifled, sighted and tested for accuracy by expert gunsmiths. It shoots as you hold. The simple, improved safety device on every Remington-UMC .22 repeater never fails to work. Accidental discharge is impossible.

The Remington-UMC .22 Repeater is easily cared for. In taking down, your fingers are your only tools. The breech block, firing pin and extractor, come out in one piece—permitting the barrel to be cleaned from the breech.

The action handles .22 short, .22 long or .22 long rifle cartridges—any or all at the same time without adjustment.

Remington-UMC—the perfect shooting combination
REMINGTON ARMS-UNION METALLIC CARTRIDGE CO.

299 Broadway, New York City



POWERFUL AIR RIFLE

Length 32 inches. Working parts of the best grades of steel. The stock is finely polished walnut. Shoots small game. Powerful, accurate, durable. You can have this air rifle for distributing only 8 of our fast selling art pictures at 25 cents on our special offer. Everybody will take one. IT COSTS YOU NOTHING to try, as we take back those you can't dispose of. Send no money, just your name and address. M. O. SEITZ, D91 CHICAGO.

JAPANESE WATER FLOWERS



Without exception, the most beautiful and interesting things on the market. They consist of a dozen dried-up sprigs, neatly encased in handsomely decorated envelopes, just as they are imported from Japan. Place one sprig in a bowl of water, and it begins to exude various bright tints. Then it slowly opens out into various shapes of exquisite flowers. They are of all colors of the rainbow. It is very amusing to watch them take form. Small size, price 5 cents; large size, 10 cents a package, by mail, postpaid.

M. V. GALLIGAN, 419 W. 56th St., N. Y.

THE PHANTOM FINGER.



As these fingers are cast in moulds in which a person's fingers have been encased, they are a lifelike model of the same. The finger can be made to pass through a person's hat or coat without injury to the hat or garment. It appears to be your own finger. A perfect illusion. Price, 15c.; 2 for 25c., postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

GOOD LUCK GUN FOB



The real western article, carried by the cowboys. It is made of fine leather, with a highly nicked buckle. The holster contains a metal gun, of the same pattern as those used by all the most famous scouts. Any boy wearing one of these fobs will attract attention. It will give him an air of western romance. The prettiest and most serviceable watch fob ever made. Send for one to-day. Price 20 cents each by mail postpaid.

M. V. GALLIGAN, 419 W. 56th St., N. Y.

Wizard Repeating LIQUID PISTOL



Will stop the most vicious dog (or man) without permanent injury.

Perfectly safe to carry without danger of leakage. Fires and recharges by pulling the trigger. Loads from any Liquid. No cartridges required. Over six shots in one loading. All dealers, or by mail, 50c. Pistol with rubber covered holster, 55c. Holsters separate, 10c. Money order or U. S. stamps. No coins.

PARKER, STEARNS & CO., 273 GEORGIA AVE., BROOKLYN, N. Y.

FREE BLUE ENAMELLED FLAG PIN.



Any letter hand engraved, and a catalog of Badge Pins, Jewelry, Tricks, Jokes and Puzzles. Send TWO cents to pay for postage and handling. BEVERLY NOVELTY CO., 208J Beverly Road, Brooklyn, N. Y.

LOTS OF FUN FOR A DIME



Ventriloquist Double Throat.

Fits roof of mouth; always invisible; greatest thing yet. Astonish and mystify your friends. Neigh like a horse; whine like a puppy; sing like a canary, and imitate birds and beasts of the field and forest. Loads of fun. Wonderful invention. Thousands sold. Price: only 10 cents; 4 for 25 cents, or 12 for 50 cents. Double Throat Co. Dpt. K Frenchtown, N. J.

BOYS \$1.00 a day giving away a free package of high grade Chewing Gum with each bunch of beautiful Easter Post Cards you sell. Send dime for complete details and big bunch of samples worth 25cts. LEON SMITH, Logan, W. Va.

ART PICTURES OF AMERICAN BEAUTIES

Every admirer of feminine beauty should have these pictures. Will send two different designs for 10c. 10 different Beauties for 25c. Be sure to get them. CASEY ART CO., 26 Broadway, Mountain View, Okla.

POCKET FLASH LIGHT SQUIRT.



Made of decorated enameled metal, representing an exact flash pocket lighter; by pressing a button instead of the bulb's eye, an electrically lighted up stream of water is ejected into the face of the spectator; an entirely new and amusing novelty.

Price, 35c., postpaid. C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

MYSTERIOUS SKULL.



Shines in the dark. The most frightful ghost ever shown. A more startling effect could not be found. Not only will it afford tremendous amusement, but it is guaranteed to scare away burglars, bill collectors, and book agents. It cannot get out of order and can be used repeatedly. Price, 4x5 inches, 15c.; by mail.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

CACHOO OR SNEEZING POWDER.



The greatest fun-maker of them all. A small amount of this powder, when blown in a room, will cause everyone to sneeze without anyone knowing where it

comes from. It is very light, will float in the air for some time, and penetrate every nook and corner of a room. It is perfectly harmless. Cachoo is put up in bottles, and one bottle contains enough to be used from 10 to 15 times. Price, by mail, 10c. each; 3 for 25c. WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

JUMPING JACK PENCIL.



This pencil is made up in handsome style and looks so inviting that every one will want to

look at it. The natural thing to do is to write with it, and just as soon as your friend tries to write, the entire inside of the pencil flies back like a jumping jack, and "Mr. Nosy" will be frightened stiff. It is one of our best pencil tricks and you will have a hard job trying to keep it. Your friends will try to take it from you. Price by mail, postpaid, 10c. each.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

NEW SURPRISE NOVELTY.



Foxy Grandpa, Mr. Peewee and other comical faces artistically colored, to which is attached a long rubber tube, connected with a rubber ball, which can be filled with water, the rubber ball being carried in the pocket, a slight pressure on the bulb causes a long stream, the result can easily be seen.

Price, 15c.,

Postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

GOOD LUCK BANKS.



Ornamental as well as useful. Made of highly nicked brass. It holds just one dollar. When filled it opens itself. Remains locked until refilled. Can be used as a watchcharm. Money refunded if not satisfied. Price, 10c. by mail.

L. Benarens, 347 Winthrop St., Brooklyn, N. Y.

IMITATION CIGAR BUTT.



It is made of a composition, exactly resembling a lighted cigar. The white ashes at the end and the imitation of tobacco-leaf being perfect. You can carelessly place it on top of the tablecloth or any other expensive piece of furniture, and await the result. After they see the joke everybody will have a good laugh. Price, 10c. each by mail, postpaid; 3 for 25c.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

AUTOMATIC COPYING PENCIL.



The importance of carrying a good reliable pencil need not be dwelt upon here.

It is an absolute necessity with us all.

The holder of this pencil is beautifully nicked with grooved box-wood handle, giving a firm grip in writing; the pencil automatically supplies the lead as needed while a box of these long leads are given with each pencil. The writing of this pencil is indelible the same as ink, and thus can be used in writing letters, addressing envelopes, etc. Bills of account or invoices made out with this pencil can be copied the same as if copying ink was used. It is the handiest pencil on the market; you do not require a knife to keep it sharp; it is ever ready, ever safe, and just the thing to carry.

Price of pencil, with box of leads complete, only 10c.; 3 for 25c.; one dozen 90c. postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

TRICK MATCHES.



Consist of a Swedish safety box, filled with matches, which will not light. Just the thing to cure the match borrowing habit. Price, 5c., postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

POCKET SAVINGS BANK.



A perfect little bank, handsomely nickel plated. Holds just five dollars (50 dimes). It cannot be opened until the bank is full, when it can be readily emptied and relocked, ready to be again refilled. Every parent should see that their children have a small savings bank, as the early habit of saving their dimes is of the greatest importance. Habits formed in early life are seldom forgotten in later years. Price of this little bank, 10c.; 3 for 25c., mailed postpaid.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

TRICK CUP.



Made of natural white wood turned, with two compartments; a round, black ball fits on those compartments; the other is a stationary ball. By a little practice you make the black ball vanish; a great trick novelty and immense seller.

Price, 10c., postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

THE AUTOPHONE.



A small musical instrument that produces very sweet musical notes by placing it between the lips with the tongue over the edge, and blowing gently into the instrument. The notes produced are not unlike those of the flute and flute. We send full printed instructions whereby anyone can play anything they can hum, whistle or sing, with very little practice. Price, 10c.; 3 for 25c., mailed, postpaid.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

MAGIC PIPE.



Made of a regular corn-cob pipe, with rubber figures inside; by blowing through the stem the figure will jump out. Made in following figures: rabbits, donkeys, cats, chickens, etc.

Price, 10c., postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

MAGIC MIRROR.



Fat and lean funny faces. By looking in these mirrors upright your features become narrow and elongated. Look into it sideways and your phiz broadens out in the most comical manner. Size 3 1/4 x 2 1/4 inches, in a handsome imitation morocco case.

Price, 10c. each, postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

THE CANADIAN WONDER CARD TRICK.



Astonishing, wonderful, and perplexing! Have you seen them? Any child can work them, and yet, what they do is so amusing that the sharpest people on earth are fooled. We cannot tell you what they do, or others would get next and spoil the fun. Just get a set and read the directions. The results will startle your friends and utterly mystify them. A genuine good thing if you wish to have no end of amusement.

Price by mail, 10c.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

PICTURE POSTALS.



They consist of Jungle sets, Map and Seal of States, Good Luck cards, Comics, with witty sayings and funny pictures, cards showing celebrated person's buildings, etc. In fact, there is such a great variety that it is not possible to describe them here. They are beautifully embossed in exquisite colors, some with glazed surfaces, and others in matt. Absolutely the handsomest cards issued.

Price 15c. for 25 cards by mail.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

STAR AND CRESCENT PUZZLE.



The puzzle is to separate the one star from the linked star and crescent without using force. Price by mail, postpaid 10c.; 3 for 25c.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

THE INK BLOT JOKER.



Fool Your Friends. —The greatest novelty of the age! Have a joke which makes everybody laugh. More fun than any other novelty that

has been shown in years. Place it on a desk, tablecloth, or any piece of furniture, as shown in the above cut, near some valuable papers, or on fine wearing apparel. Watch the result! Oh, Gee! Price, 15c. each, postpaid.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.



ELECTRIC PUSH BUTTON.—The base is made of maple, and the center piece of black walnut, the whole thing about 1 1/4 inches in diameter, with a metal hook on the back so that it may be slipped over edge of the vest pocket. Expose to view your New Electric Bell, when your friend will

push the button expecting to hear it ring. As soon as he touches it, you will see some of the liveliest dancing you ever witnessed. The Electric Button is heavily charged and will give a smart shock when the button is pushed.

Price 10c., by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

SNAKE IN THE CAMERA.



To all appearances this little startler is a nice looking camera. The proper way to use it is to tell your friends you are going to take their pictures. Of course they are tickled, for nearly everybody wants to

pose for a photograph. You arrange them in a group, fuss around a little bit, aim your camera at them, and request the ladies to look pleasant. As soon as they are smiling and trying to appear beautiful, press the spring in your camera. Imagine the yell when a huge snake jumps out into the crowd. Guaranteed to take the swelling out of any one's head at the first shot.

Price 35 cents, by mail, postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

THE MAGIC DAGGER.



A wonderful illusion. To all appearances it is an ordinary dagger which you can flourish around in your hand

and suddenly state that you think you have lived long enough and had better commit suicide, at the same time plunging the dagger up to the hilt into your breast or side, or you can pretend to stab a friend or acquaintance. Of course your friend or yourself are not injured in the least, but the deception is perfect and will startle all who see it.

Price, 10c., or 3 for 25c. by mail, postpaid.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

THE MAGIC CARD BOX.



One of the best and cheapest tricks for giving parlor or stage exhibitions. The trick is performed as follows: You request any two persons in your audience to each select a card from an ordinary pack of cards, you then produce a small handsome box made to imitate pebbled leather, which

anyone may examine as closely as they will. You now ask one of the two who have selected cards to place his or her card inside the box, which being done, the lid is shut, and the box placed on the table. You then state that you will cause the cards to disappear and upon opening the box the card has vanished and the box found empty. The other card is now placed in the box; the lid is again closed and when the box is opened the first card appears as strangely as it went. Other tricks can be performed in various ways. You may cause several cards to disappear after they are placed in the box, and then you can cause them all to appear at once. You may tear a card up, place it in the box, and on lifting the cover it will be found whole and entire. In fact, nearly every trick of appearance and disappearance can be done with the Magic Card Box. Full printed instructions, by which anyone can perform the different tricks, sent with each box.

Price, 20c. by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.